■ Lifestyle / E2
Bayanihan dances way to Olympics

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Allan Cosio: Nude and natural

■ News / A5
Small players hike gasoline prices today

■ Entertainment / C1
Complaint vs Mother Lily probed

Tanong ng Bayan / A20
Pambayad sa utang: Kung 'di bagong buwis, ano?
WIN A 21" TV! TEXT 2910

AFP wants to exhume body of bandit leader

TO DISPEL all doubts that Pentagon kidnap gang leader Alonto Tahir is dead, why not exhume his body?

The military raised this possibility yesterday after the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) disputed official accounts that Tahir was among the at least 15 Pentagon members killed in an Air Force bombardment of their suspected hide-

AFP/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'Fastest' judge among 6 Gender Justice awardees

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
PDI N. Luzon Bureau

MAPAPABILIS ANG HATOL SA AMIN!

AGOO, La Union—The country's "fastest" judge is one of six recipients of the first Gender Justice Awards. Judge Clifton Ganay of

'FASTEST'/ A21

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Monday, August 16, 2004 ★★ 88 pages / 10 sections / vol. 19 / no. 250 P18

website: www.inq7.net

₱2M offered for info on media murders

Journalists to wear black in Crame rally today

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau
and TJ Burgonio

A HUGE cash reward might do the trick this time.

A P2-million reward has been offered by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. to anyone who can give information that will lead to the arrest of those who participated in the recent killings of journalists.

De Venecia, a journalist in his younger days, said P500,000 would come from his pocket, P500,000 from his pork barrel and P1 million from the pooled funds of his colleagues in the House of Representatives.

"I hope to God all of these (killings) will come to [an end]," said the Speaker, who had worked for Pan-Asia, the first wire service agency in Asia, as a reporter and later wrote a syndicated column for The Philippines Herald before 1972.

At least six Filipino journalists have been killed this year, four of them gunned down in a span of two weeks. All of them were working for print and broadcast media organizations based in the provinces.

Since the Edsa Revolution in 1986, 79 journalists have been killed, but only one perpetrator, a policeman, has been convicted and jailed, according to data gathered by Inquirer Research. *(See related stories on Pages A4 and A19.)*

De Venecia's offer is the biggest reward for the capture of the killers of journalists.

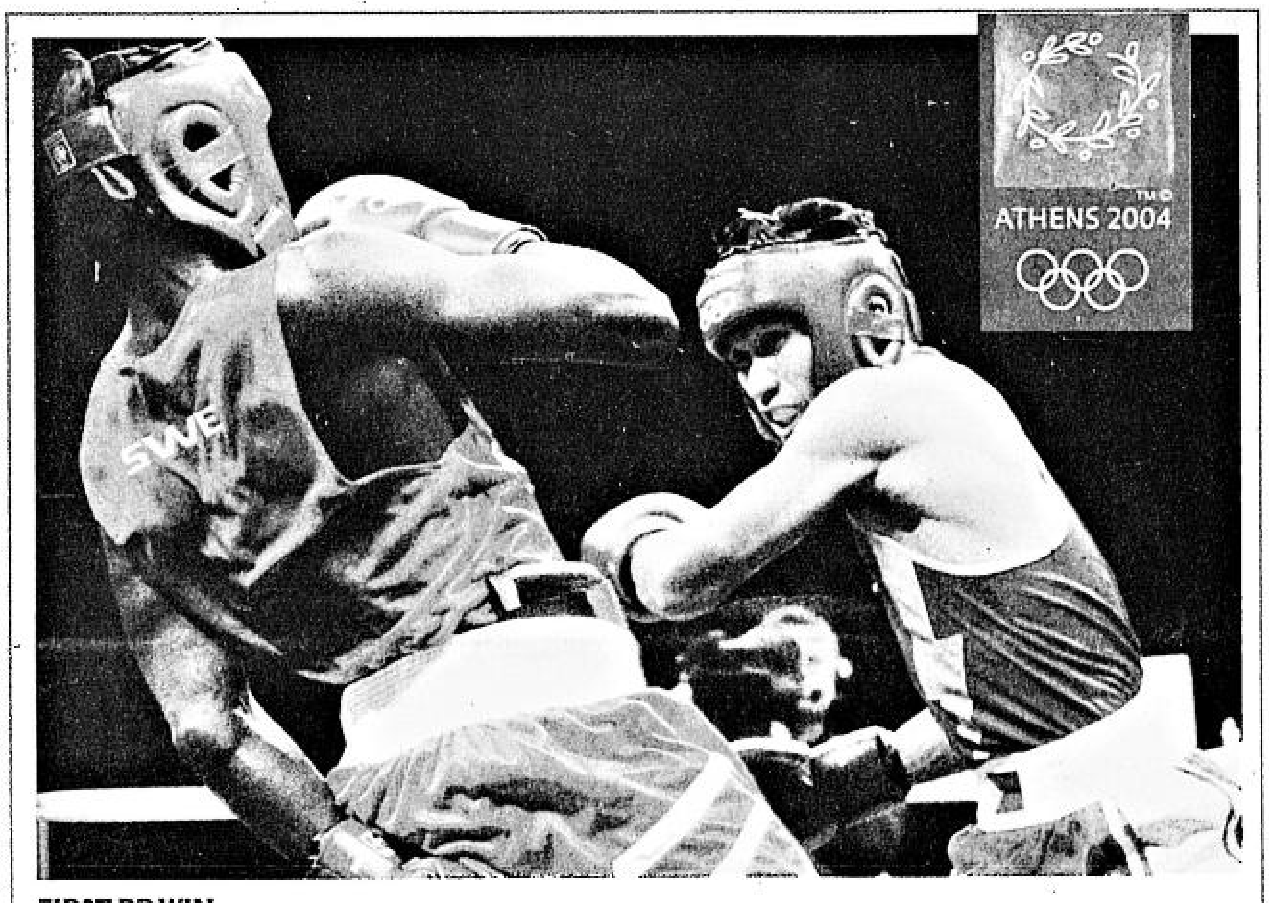
On Nov. 7, 2003, President Macapagal-Arroyo "committed P1 million as a reward for the solution of the killings of media practitioners over the past five years."

No one has collected the reward.

In Tarlac, former President Corazon Aquino said the rash of killings of journalists was disturbing.

"(Ninoy) was never afraid to inform the public of the truth and I am sure he would be disturbed by what was happening right now," said the widow of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., a reporter of

P2M OFFERED/ A4



FIRST RP WIN
FILIPINO Romeo Brin (right) presses the attack on Patrick Bogere of Sweden whom he beat, 43-35, in their preliminary Olympic welterweight fight last night at the Peristeri Boxing Hall in Athens. Brin, who came out of retirement to qualify for his third Olympics, needs three more wins to advance to the medal round. *(See Page A25.)*

AFP

Bible, shaving kit for NPA captives

By Christian V. Esguerra
and Carlito Pablo

UNLIKE the riotous welcome truck driver Angelo de la Cruz got, there will be no parties and no brass bands waiting for them when Lt. Ronaldo "Butch" Fidelino and Pfc. Ronel Nemeño come home, hopefully within the next 48 hours.

Just a big kiss, a warm embrace, their favorite dishes, a Bible—and a shaving kit.

"Butch is not the type who likes big parties," Fidelino's wife Leah told the INQUIRER yesterday. "He's happy just being with the people he loves."

Captured during a gun battle in Camarines Sur on Feb. 29, the two low-key Philippine Army soldiers have been held captive somewhere around or near Bicol for nearly six months by New People's Army guerrillas.

A temporary ceasefire agreement between the government and the NPA has cleared the way for their release within 72 hours, starting at 12:01 a.m. yesterday, negotiators said.

Why a shaving kit?

It's because they have been in captivity for so long that one of them has grown a Jesus-like beard.

Leah last communicated with her husband at around 7 p.m. on Feb. 29. Fidelino

BIBLE/ A20

No sacred cows in pork probe, says Ombudsman

By Armand N. Nocum

AMID renewed calls for the scrapping of the pork barrel, the Office of the Ombudsman has assured the public there will be no whitewash in its investigation of the alleged misuse of the Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF).

One case of alleged misuse of the pork barrel involves about P26 million in the PDAF of Rep. Clavel A. Martinez, who allegedly deposited the bulk of the money intended for the Girl Scouts of the Philippines (GSP)-Cebu into her private bank account.

Another congressman, who is from Mindanao, is also being investigated by the Office of the Ombudsman for misusing his pork barrel.

Martinez allegedly used the GSP in Cebu, when she and her daughter were serving as scouting officers, as a "conduit" so she could claim the money for herself in 2002. The money was released in three tranches—two in 2002 and one in 2003.

Contacted by phone on Friday, Martinez, a member of the administration party and representative of the fourth district of Cebu, described the issue as "hogwash."

"That's incorrect, I've been cleared by

NO SACRED/ A4

RP finance sleuth stalks terrorists

VICENTE Aquino patrols an obscure front of the war on terror in the Philippines, fighting alongside a platoon of accountants.

Working in a secluded wing of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas complex, Aquino and his Anti-Money Laundering Council sleuths pore over reams of wire transfers, trying to isolate the drug dealers, kidnappers and pyramid scheme swindlers from legitimate businessmen.

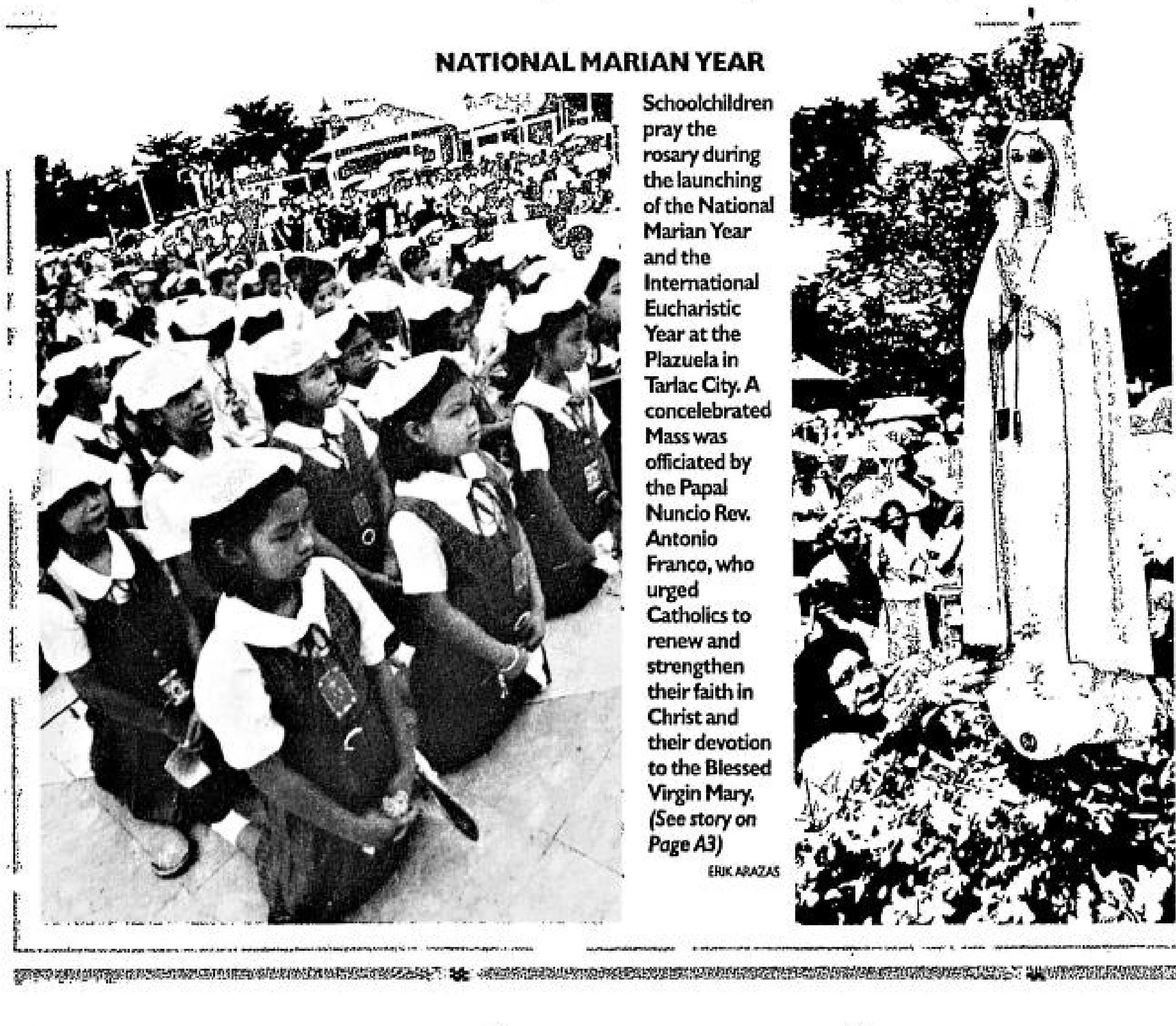
They are also "looking into" the accounts of entities suspected as conduits of terrorist funds. Aquino declines to discuss specific cases.

"Our job entails a lot of risks, grave risks," he told Agence France-Presse in an interview. "We are up against money launderers, organized crime groups and even financiers of terrorists."

The 45-member staff receives daily

RP FINANCE/ A22

NATIONAL MARIAN YEAR



Schoolchildren pray the rosary during the launching of the National Marian Year and the International Eucharistic Year at the Plazuela in Tarlac City. A concelebrated Mass was officiated by the Papal Nuncio Rev. Antonio Franco, who urged Catholics to renew and strengthen their faith in Christ and their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. *(See story on Page A3)*

ERIK ARAZAS

Former 'Singing Nun' offers songs of hope

By Volt Contreras

SHE MAKES hope come alive with the sound of music.

Not unlike Maria in that famous musical, this pious yet "free-spirited" composer-songwriter left the convent after more than a decade as a nun. Well into her resumed secular life, Carmen "Pinky" Valdes has answered a new calling.

She survived a serious stroke two years ago and figured it was God's way of urging her to touch more lives with her gifts, by helping people in pain.

And so, minus the habit, Valdes is back on a mission. Enlisting the help of singing talents from among her former students at Assumption College, Valdes produced a CD titled "Sandalwood," featuring 13 original songs of comfort and inspiration.

Proceeds from all CD sales and from a concert-launch tomorrow, 6:30 p.m., at the Peninsula Hotel Manila, will go to charity.

"Be like the sandalwood which perfumes the ax that wounds it," Valdes told the INQUIRER last week in Quezon City, quoting an old Spanish proverb about the fragrant tree that inspired the title track.

"Enough of this feeling depressed and putting people down," said Valdes, who's on leave from her job as vice president for human resources of a company in San Francisco, California. "We have to help our society and people in suffering. They need a sense of hope."

She explained: "I want them to understand one thing, which is very critical. People usually think that when they are suffering, say from cancer, hope means they will get well soon. Hope is different from that. Hope means finding a meaning to the suffering even if we don't get well."

Valdes has a master's degree in theology and education management. Her songs are poetry set to melodies. For example, "Lift Your Face to the Rain," invites listeners to reflect: "Don't you know it takes fire to make gold?/And the night must fall before the stars appear?/Don't you know pearls are made out of sand?/And a seed must die to let a flower live?"

This makes it easy to believe her account that recording engineer David Wellhausen was moved to tears when working on "Sandalwood" at the Au-

FORMER/ A21

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly clourainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/06/28/02

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FrontPage

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After oil price hikes, higher interest rates seen to jolt economy

By Gil C. Cabacungan, Jr.

ALREADY reeling from the series of oil price hikes, the Philippine economy is likely to be jolted by an interest rate shock as rising US interest rates inevitably jack up government debt payments and increase the cost of borrowings.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and Congress yesterday warned that higher US interest rates could cripple the economy which is already saddled by escalating crude oil prices which have reached new historic highs in recent weeks.

BSP investor relations head Cora Guidote told the INQUIRER that the move of the US Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates and the outlook for more rate increases in the coming months have made it more imperative for the government to get additional sources of revenue.

The US Fed rate is used as the benchmark rate for international borrowings and a higher rate automatically translates to higher interest expenses for the country's foreign debt.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda , who is also a member of the Economic Managers Group, said the US Fed's move to hike interest rates from 1 percent to 1.5 percent in less than two months would add P9 billion in additional interest expenses to the government's budget.

The US Fed plans to raise its rates to contain inflation in the growing economy.

With most economic experts expecting the US Fed to raise interest rates by as much as 100 basis points to 2.5 percent by 2005, Salceda said the government should prepare for an additional P18 billion in terms of interest expenses.

With 85 percent or P575.607 billion of this year's budget already earmarked for debt servicing, the government can hardly afford more interest expenses at this time.

Salceda said the twin shocks of rising oil prices and interest rates have increased the pressure on the Arroyo administration to get Congress to agree to its P80 billion tax reform package centered on the imposition of a P2 per liter oil tax.

He noted that while opposition to the President's tax reform measures have been mounting, the fiscal problem has worsened due to negative external factors that are out of our hands.

"Without new revenues, the interest rate shock may lead to disruptions in demand for business and in supply for consumers," Salceda said.

BSP Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura earlier said that monetary authorities would have to assess the situation in the event the US Fed raises its interest rates.

Buenaventura said it may not be necessary for the BSP to follow the increase in US Fed rates and likewise raise its key policy rates .since the market has adjusted itself.

Monetary authorities usually match the move by the US Fed to prevent capital flight as investors usually put their funds in countries that offer higher interest rates.

The BSP has kept its key policy rates unchanged for 13 months now. Its overnight borrowing rate has remained at 6.7 percent while its overnight lending rate is at 9 percent.

An increase in BSP's key rates would tighten the money supply and raise the cost of borrowing. This, in turn, affects economic growth as companies shy away from borrowing money to finance their expansion programs.

Aside from the US Fed rate hike, another factor that would prompt the BSP to raise its key policy rates are the rising oil prices which have pushed up the prices of goods and services in recent weeks.

Higher oil prices had raised the country's inflation rate to 6 percent in July, the highest level in almost three years.

FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION. President Arroyo shows off the frame depicting a classroom that was presented to her as a gift by the officials and alumnae of Assumption College, represented by Judy Araneta-Roxas (left), during the celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Assumption yesterday in Malacañang. PCPO-MALACANANG

House completes allocation of panel chairmanships

By Carlito Pablo

AFTER weeks of jockeying for juicy chairmanships by members of the House, the lower chamber has finally completed its reorganization, except for two panels—the Commission on Appointments and the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal.

"The allocation is based on fair and equitable power sharing, responsibility sharing and burden sharing," Speaker Jose de Venecia said yesterday.

De Venecia said that with the completion of the reorganization the House will now start deliberations on the "sin taxes" which aim to generate up to P15 billion in additional revenues.

"Public hearings by the committees will open by next week and the bill in so-called sin taxes—those imposed on alcoholic drinks and cigarettes—tops the priority bills in a major effort to reduce the budget deficit," De Venecia said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo wants Congress to pass eight tax measures which will raise P80 billion for the cash-strapped government.

Under the Constitution, all revenue measures shall emanate from the House.

"If necessary, we will have hearings twice a week on the revenue and tax-reform measures as well as economic development and social reform initiatives," De Venecia said.

Among the pending tax measures is the proposed levy of an additional P2 per liter on petroleum products.

De Venecia said that except for the compositions of the House contingents to the Commission on Appointments and House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal, all committee chairmanships and vice-chairmanships have been filled up.

House Majority Floor Leader Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) described the reorganization as having complied with the Speaker's instructions to give each political party what it deserves on "proportional representation."

"Everybody is happy," Nograles said.

The dominant Lakas-CMD, the biggest political party, got 30 committee chairmanships and at least 60 vice-chairmanships.

The Nationalist People's Coalition received 13 chairmanships and at least 10 vice chairmanships.

The Liberal Party got 11 committee chairmanships and at least 35 vice chairmanships.

The recently revived Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino received 10 chairmanships and at least 20 vice chairmanships.

The Nacionalista Party got two committee chairmanships and at least 12 vice chairmanships.

The party-list bloc bagged four committee chairmanships and at least 24 vice chairmanships.

The proposed tax measures will be subject to hearings by the House committee on ways and means.

Soldier killed, 3 others hurt in clash with Abus

ZAMBOANGA—Government troops clashed Sunday with Abu Sayyaf Group members in Jolo, leaving one soldier dead and up to six others from both sides wounded, the military said.

Troops caught up with Abu Sayyaf gunmen near the town of Indanan, triggering the gun battle, said military spokesman Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero.

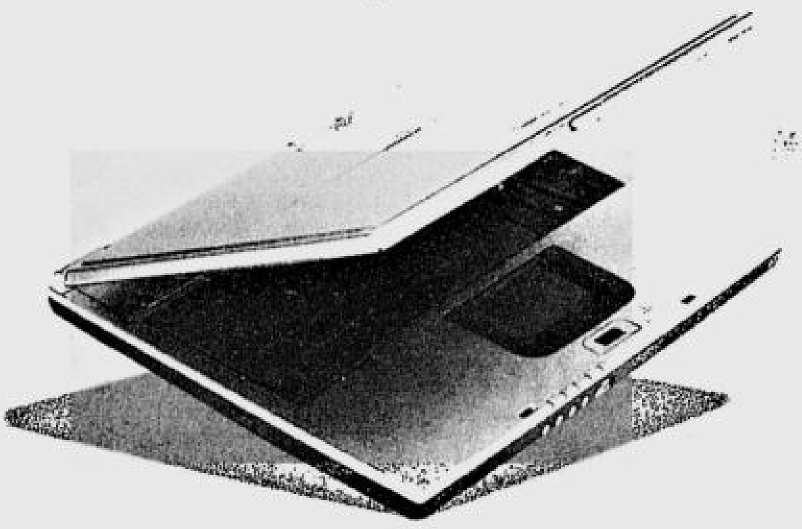
Lucero said one soldier was killed, while three others were wounded. Three rebels were believed wounded in the firefight, according to messages intercepted over rebel radio.

"There could be more enemy casualties, but initial military reports said one government soldier was killed. Three soldiers and three rebels were wounded in the fighting," Lucero said.

"The operation is going on and we are still awaiting reports from our combat forces," he added.

The Abu Sayyaf is considered a terrorist group by the US and Philippine governments and was blamed for the kidnapping deaths of two American in 2002.

Last week, a court in the southern Philippines sentenced to death 17 Abu Sayyaf members who raided a hospital and a church compound on the island of Basilan in 2000. *AFP*



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Nat'l Marian Year, Int'l Eucharistic Year launched

By Jo Clemente
PDI Central Luzon Desk

TARLAC CITY—The Papal Nuncio Rev. Antonio Franco officiated at a concelebrated Mass here yesterday launching National Marian Year and the International Eucharistic Year.

In his message, Franco urged Catholics across the country to renew and strengthen their faith in Christ and their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary to heal the wounds of society. *(See photo on Page A1.)*

"We need the saving power of Jesus for renewal and conversion, and we should seek and search for Mary so she can lead us to Jesus to heal the wounds that still affect our person, our lives and our behavior," he said.

Franco noted that even the Catholic Church needed renewal and conversion because "we are made of human beings—the bishops, the priests, the lay people. Society needs to be healed. Good has to prevail and we have to promote justice and the well-being of the people," he said.

Former President Corazon Aquino, who is from Tarlac, attended the mass and the early morning praying of the rosary.

She was impressed with Angela Villanueva, a six-year-old Grade 1 pupil of a public school here, who led the praying of the last decade of the rosary.

Aquino said it was good to see children praying and urged parents to teach their children how to pray at an early age.

The National Marian Year started yesterday, which was also the Feast of the Assumption, and ends on Dec. 8, 2005, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the papal definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

It coincides with the launch of the International Eucharistic Year as declared by Pope John Paul II, which starts in October this year and ends in October 2005.

The theme of the dual celebration is "Celebrating the Eucharist with Mary."

To celebrate the Marian year here, Tarlac Bishop Florentino Cinense declared 20 areas in the province, such as the Our Lady of Sorrows in Capas town and the Our Lady of Peace in La Paz town, as pilgrim sites.

PAL women sue over early retirement

By Michael Lim Ubac

IN A landmark class suit expected to test gender equality in the country, female cabin attendants of Philippine Airlines have asked a Makati court to declare as "patently unconstitutional" the airline policy that compels them to retire five years earlier than their male counterparts.

The gravity of the case compelled the Makati Regional Trial Court on Aug. 10 to assume jurisdiction over it and issue a temporary restraining order against PAL, effective for 20 days.

Judge Ma. Cristina J. Cornejo, presiding officer of Makati RTC Branch 147 ordered PAL—for the moment—not to implement its policy which compels cabin attendants to retire at age 55 for females and 60 for males.

The hearing on the flight attendants' application for preliminary injunction is set for Aug. 25.

"There is no reasonable, much less lawful, basis for Philippine Airlines to distinguish, differentiate or classify cabin attendants on the basis of sex and thereby arbitrarily set a lower compulsory retirement age for petitioners for the sole reason that they are women," argued lawyer Lorna Patajo-Kapunan.

Kapunan, senior partner at the Roco, Kapunan, Migallos, Perez & Luna Law Offices, is the lead counsel for the Flight Attendants and Stewards Association of the Philippines (FASAP), a labor organization certified as the sole and exclusive bargaining representative of the flight attendants, flight stewards and pursers (collectively called cabin attendants) of PAL.

But PAL, through lawyer Rodello P. Buado, associate counsel for the Lucio Tan Group of Companies, questioned the jurisdiction of the court over the issue.

Buado claimed that all controversies involving employer-employee relations would fall within the jurisdiction of the labor tribunals and agencies.

But the court sustained the argument of petitioners' counsel that "unless it be shown that a particular subject matter is, by law, lodged with another body, this Honorable Court retains jurisdiction," said lawyer Lester Alvarado Flores, co-counsel for the cabin attendants.

The petitioners, led by Patricia Halaguena, decried their treatment by PAL as "flying GROs" (guest relations officers) whose value on the job decreases proportionately with age. On the contrary, they said, experience enables them to better perform their tasks as inflight safety and service officers.

Unlike the more progressive airlines in the United States and Europe that have even sexagenarian cabin attendants, PAL persistently clings to the "old, sexist stereotype of stewardesses as young and attractive entertainers in the sky," they said.

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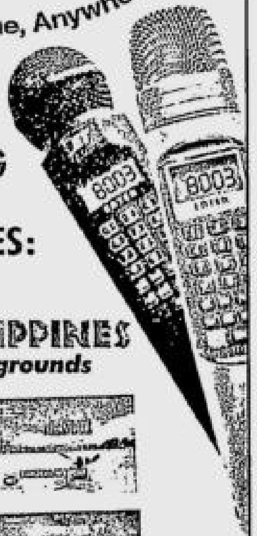

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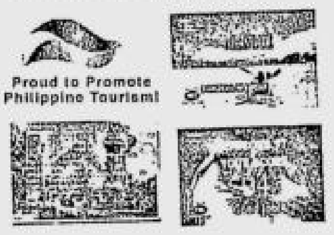

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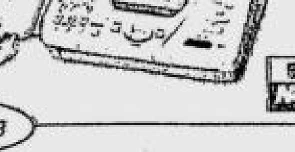

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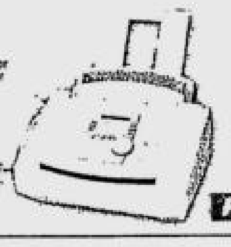

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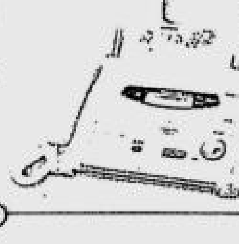

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Copy Speed				2 PPM	4 PPM	4 PPM	2 PPM	10 PPM
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Document Memory			20 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	28 pages (max)	120 pages (max)
Digital Answering System			●			●	●	
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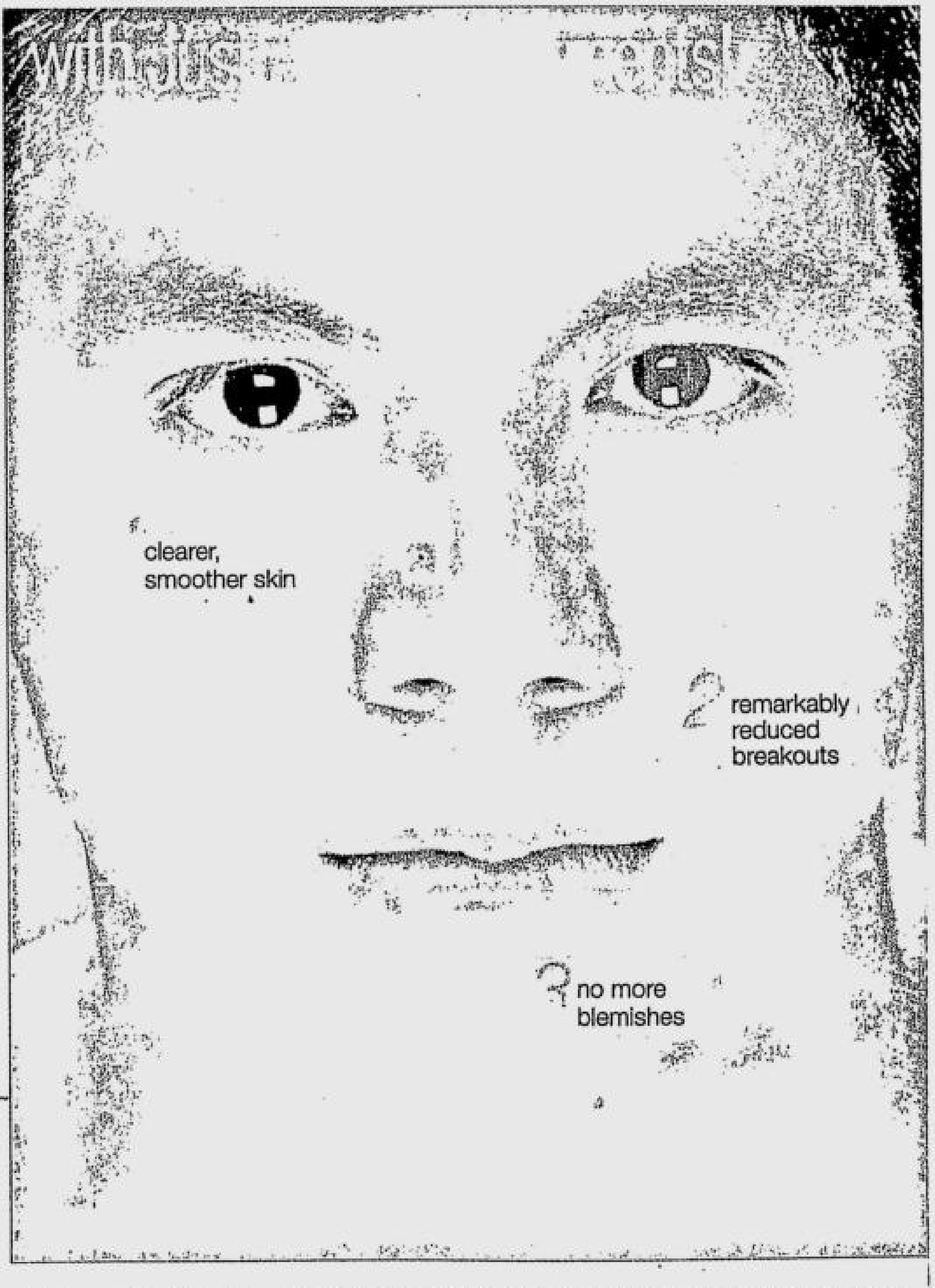

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Widow reminds media groups of unlisted victim

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—"Why is Ike's name not on the list of murdered media reporters?"

That was the very first question Bonifacia Lingan, 72, asked the moment the INQUIRER met with her yesterday for an interview. She is the widow of Enrique "Ike" Lingan, a hard-hitting radio commentator and reporter who was killed on Feb. 4, 1990.

A total of 55 journalists have been murdered since press freedom was supposedly restored in the country after the Marcos regime was toppled in 1986, according to the records of different media groups.

For Bonifacia, the non-inclusion of her husband's name in the list of media people killed in the country is not easy to accept.

"Maybe they just missed his name," she said. She wondered whether the violent death of her husband at the hands of a policeman was meaningless and insignificant to the present breed of media workers.

"My Ike was true to his chosen profession when he was still alive. He was fearless but was fair in his reporting and commentaries," Bonifacia said in Filipino in her hovel near an abandoned airport in Barangay Ibabang Iyam here.

Court records showed that on the evening of Feb. 4, 1990, Ike, together with two other local radio reporters, went to a nightclub following reports that it was showing nude dancers.

When a scantily clad dancer appeared on stage and began to perform a strip act, one of Ike's companions brought out his camera and took a picture. This angered the club's floor manager and bouncer, who immediately accosted and pushed the photographer.

Sensing trouble, Ike's group decided to leave and file a complaint at the police station.

Police drinking at station

Shortly after they arrived at the station, the floor manager and the bouncer turned up and talked with a policeman, Felipe Navarro, who was then having a drink with colleagues while on duty.

It turned out that the manager was related to the police officer. So, instead of entertaining the complaint, Navarro pushed one of Ike's companions to the wall and with a cocked gun threatened to shoot the reporter.

BONIFACIA Lingan, 72, holds on to the only remaining printed material in her possession which reported the death of her husband Ike, a hard-hitting radio commentator in Quezon.

DELFIN T. MALLARI JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

At this point, Ike intervened and introduced himself. But Navarro berated and pistol-whipped him. Ike fell to the floor, blood flowing down his face.

He tried to get up, but Navarro floored him with a blow to the forehead. Ike was rushed to the hospital but died from his head injuries.

Media practitioners staged rallies to protest the killing. Navarro was sentenced to up to 14 years and 8 months in prison. He is still serving his term in Muntinlupa.

"When someone reported to me that Navarro was living out when he was supposed to rot in jail, I immediately went to Bilibid with borrowed money for bus fare. I made sure that he was still there," Ike's widow said. "The prison officials assured me that they will not let him out until the court tells them to do so."

Washing clothes

"But I can't forgive him even if he finishes his sentence. He owed a life," she said, her eyes raging.

Bonifacia said she just wanted media groups to correct their list and include the name of her husband. "Ike's memory was my only remaining treasure in life."

Save for tattered clippings from a local tabloid, her photos of him and news clippings were destroyed by typhoons.

She advised news reporters to always observe the ethics of the profession.

"And if they can avoid not to hit hard the target of their news and exposé, it's much better. So that no more families of media men will cry again and be left alone to fend for themselves," she said, holding back tears.

In their 22 years of companionship, they remained childless.

Bonifacia manages to survive by washing clothes for some rich families in the city. Once a week, she distributes complimentary copies of a local newspaper to business establishments and government offices in the poblacion.

"That's P300, and that means a lot to an old woman like me," she said.

₱2M offered for info on media murders

From page A1

The Manila Times who covered the Vietnam War in the 1960s.

The former senator was murdered on Aug. 21, 1983, on his return from self-exile in the United States.

Wear black

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) has exhorted reporters to join a rally and wear black today to protest the alleged failure of the police and judiciary to solve the cases of slain journalists over the past 18 years.

The NUJP, which is leading other media organizations in a picket this morning at the national police headquarters in Camp Crame in Quezon City, said this failure to convict suspects in the killings had spawned a "climate of impunity" against journalists.

"Join us in registering our displeasure toward the failure of the police and judiciary to solve these killings," Inday Espina-Varona, NUJP chair, said in a statement e-mailed to journalists.

"Please wear black on Monday, whether you will attend the picket or not. This is our small way of mourning the deaths of our colleagues and expressing outrage over the killings," she added.

Varona described the period between July 31 and Aug. 12—during which four broadcast journalists were gunned down—as the "worst two weeks" for press freedom in the Philippines.

Six journalists have been killed this year, one short of the figure last year, which is so far the highest annual death toll.

"The failure by the authorities to solve the killings over the years is astounding. Not even President Arroyo's directive to the PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane to solve these murders has any produced any positive results," Varona said.

Carlos Conde, NUJP secretary general, agreed with Varona, saying the authorities' failure to solve cases only emboldened people who hold grudges against journalists to make good their threats to harm them.

Serious steps

Varona lamented that the police considered a case solved after they had identified the suspect and filed the charges against him in the courts, "no matter if the case was still pending or if the suspect was still at large."

"This is not only misleading—it mocks the justice system and the suffering of the families and friends of our fallen colleagues," she said.

Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, national police spokesperson, took exception to NUJP's claims, saying that the national police has been taking serious steps to crack cases, including those involving journalists.

In the wake of the killings, he said the police quickly formed Task Force Newsmen, spearheaded by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, to conduct follow-ups on the cases.

"We're trying to solve cases. We don't stop; we're pursuing cases. It just so happened that these are murders. These are carefully planned crimes," Goltiao said in a phone interview.

The police hierarchy is also planning to hold a dialogue with officials of the NUJP and other media organizations either after today's picket or tomorrow to discuss their concerns, according to Goltiao.

Firearms

For the protection of journalists, especially those receiving death threats, Ebdane had suggested that they be issued firearms.

But De Venecia said the decision to arm journalists should be left to journalists and media organizations.

"We cannot dictate on you, it will have to be your own voluntary decision," De Venecia said.

The Speaker said the spate of killings was a threat to press freedom. "When they kill media representatives, that's a direct assault on press freedom in the country. They want to frighten you from exposing corruption and misbehavior in the provinces, cities and towns," he said.

But journalists should also be responsible in their criticisms of local officials, who also have a reputation to protect, according to De Venecia, who holds a BS Journalism degree from the Ateneo de Manila University.

"We call on both sides to be very responsible in the practice of their professions, he said.

He asked public servants to be responsible and never to be abusive to avoid being criticized by the media.

"(Members of the) media should be responsible, should be moderate and not be abusive in the same way that public servants must not be abusive. Everything must be balanced, balanced, balanced. That is the key," he said.

Journalists joining today's picket-rally are advised to assemble in front of the Soliven Tower on Edsa corner Annapolis Street in Greenhills at around 9 a.m.

NUJP chapters and other media groups in the provinces are also holding protest actions today.

In General Santos City, journalists will hold a motorcade at around 8:30 a.m. It will be led by the newly formed Task Force Media and the local KBP.

Media practitioners in the city agreed during a meeting Saturday night to wear black T-shirts or black arm band to mourn the separate killings of dzRH Radyo Natin commentator Ely Binoya and GMA Super Radyo reporter Jun Abayon.

The wives of the two slain newsmen said they would be attending the rally to ask authorities to exert effort to arrest the suspects in the killings.

In search of a man tagged in the death of a journalist in General Santos City, the National Bureau of Investigation has decided to tap the suspect's employer, international boxing champion Manny Pacquiao.

After appeals for it to step into the investigation of the shooting of radio reporter Jonathan Abayon a week ago, the NBI has sought Pacquiao's help in pursuing suspect William Bael, who is known to be his bodyguard.

"I directed my NBI officers there [General Santos City] to get in touch with Manny Pacquiao for the surrender of his bodyguard," said NBI Director General Reynaldo Wycoco. *With reports from Jo Clemente, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Tarra V. Quismundo in Manila*

No sacred cows in pork probe–Ombudsman

From page A1

the COA (Commission on Audit)," Martinez said of the charges which she said was filed by anonymous complainants. "I don't want to face faceless people. If they come forward, I'll sue them."

"We have no sacred cows. We will go after them no matter how high and mighty they are," said Assistant Ombudsman Ernesto Nocos, also the spokesperson of the antigraft office.

The PDAF, previously known as the Countrywide Development Fund, is a pork barrel, a source of kickbacks and campaign funds for legislators. A senator said that up to 60 percent of the pork barrel for infrastructure projects, such as roads, was lost to corruption.

A member of the House of Representatives is allocated P65 million in PDAF a year, while a senator is allocated P200 million.

The government's plan to increase and impose new taxes has revived calls for the abolition of the pork barrel, with people saying there was no need for new taxes if the graft-prone pork barrel was scrapped.

Told that Martinez was a member of the House prosecution panel during the impeachment trial of ousted President Joseph Estrada in 2000, Nocos replied: "We will still investigate her even if she was in the House prosecution panel."

"See how the Ombudsman (Simeon Marcelo) will act on it," he said.

Virginia Şantiago, head of the Public Assistance and Corruption Prevention Office in the Office of the Ombudsman in the Visayas, said the complaint against Martinez stemmed from a report of the GSP Council in Cebu, which earlier created a fact-finding committee to look into the matter.

The GSP-Cebu committee report showed that Martinez allegedly deposited the P11.5 million intended for the GSP into her account with the Bank of the Philippine Islands branch in Pasay City on Sept. 22, 2003.

The transaction took place when Martinez was president of the GSP-Cebu and her daughter Ma. Cielo was the treasurer. The P26 million was meant to be a "financial assistance" to the GSP council in Cebu.

Mayor of Bogo

The P11.5 million was reportedly issued to the municipal government of Bogo, Cebu, where Martinez's son, Celestino "Tining" Martinez III, was the mayor. It was payable to the GSP.

But instead of depositing the money in the GSP account, it was reportedly returned to the branch of the Land Bank of the Philippines in Bogo, where it was changed into a manager's check made out to Ma. Cielo Martinez.

The transaction was reportedly not backed by a resolution from the GSP council. The GSP came to know about the movement of its funds when the Land Bank-Bogo office asked for a resolution from GSP officials.

In two separate transactions, the Bogo town received P7.5 million from Martinez's PDAF and the funds were deposited in the GSP council's trust fund. But on separate occasions, the funds were converted into GSP checks payable to cash and were received by Martinez.

But from the P15 million, Martinez reportedly donated P600,000 to the GSP council in Cebu.

As in the P11.5 transaction, the P15 million was reportedly not covered by an authorization or resolution from the GSP council.

Contrary to the claims of Martinez, Santiago said the COA had yet to issue a ruling on the matter. It was Santiago who asked the COA to do a special audit of the funds.

Corrections

IN THE Aug. 12 issue, a front-page story misstated that Edilwasif Badiri was "the first full-blooded" Tausug to gain admission to the Master of Public Administration program of the John F. Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University. There have been other Tausugs who have not only gained admission to the program but who have earned master's degrees in public administration at the prestigious school. One is Amina Rasul who earned her MPA at the same school in 1999; another is Madge Kho who earned hers in 1991. And they are no less "full-blooded" Tausugs than Badiri is.

In some copies of the same issue, the headline of the front-page story, "1st Tausug admitted to Harvard," also gave the wrong impression that Badiri was the first Tausug admitted to the American university in Cambridge, Massachusetts. There have been many Tausugs who have graduated from Harvard's medical and law schools.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 13 issue, the front-page banner story, "Gov't to sell vanity plates," misspelled the name of the assistant transportation secretary. The correct spelling is Anneli—not Analy—Lontoc.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 14 issue, the front-page banner story misstated the location of the Pentagon gang's suspected hideout that the military had attacked. The suspected hideout is located in the Maguindanao town of SK (for Salipada K.) Pendatun—not Sultan Kudarat Pendatun.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 14 issue, a story on Page A4—"Drug users hit 3.4M as of July, says PNP"—erroneously reported that the country had an estimated 3.4 million drug users as of July this year, "almost double the 1.8 million figure a month before." About 1.8 million drug users were recorded in June 2003, not June 2004—or a year, not a month, before.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

dti
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

TO : DISTRIBUTORS and RETAILERS of ISLAND (PORTLAND) CEMENT manufactured by CEMEX PHILS., Inc./SOLID CEMENT CORP. (Antipolo, Rizal Plant),

and the GENERAL PUBLIC

The DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY – OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS hereby informs:

That a PRELIMINARY ORDER, dated August 12, 2004, was issued by the DTI ADJUDICATION OFFICER in Administrative Case No. 04-07, entitled "DTI-Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection, Complainant, vs. Solid Cement Corp., CEMEX, Jaime Ruiz de Haro, Jose Luis Saenz de Miera and Francisco Cue, Respondents", for violation of quality/safety standards, as provided in Article 18(a), Chap. 1 of R.A. 7394 (CONSUMER ACT); the dispositive portion thereof reads as follows:

"In view thereof, the ADJUDICATION OFFICER is fully satisfied xxx xxx that the Respondents herein are continuing to manufacture for sale and to distribute in commerce their Portland Cement (Island Cement) which has consistently failed to pass the DPWH-BRS tests, thus tending to render ineffectual any adverse judgment that may be rendered herein.

WHEREFORE, premises considered, let an ORDER be, as it is hereby issued:

1. COMMANDING Respondents to immediately CEASE and DESIST from selling, distributing, delivering and disposing of ISLAND CEMENT, or any brand manufactured by the SOLID Cement plant in Antipolo, Rizal, in bulk and in bags, to customers, dealers, and distributors, including, but not limited to, batching plants and hardware outlets/stores;

2. x x x x x x x x x.

SO ORDERED.

Makati City, 12 August 2004.

(Sgd.) ATTY. VIRGILIO A. SEVANDAL
Director IV, C.E.S.O. III
Adjudication Officer

VIOLATORS of the ORDER above-quoted will be held in CONTEMPT and penalized with CLOSURE of their business establishment, among others.

(Sgd.) ATTY. VIRGILIO A. SEVANDAL
DTI Adjudication Officer

(PDI – August 15 & 16, 2004)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Go slow on North Rail project, businessmen warn GMA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL businessmen have urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to go slow on the North Rail project—estimated to cost nearly P1 billion per kilometer—which Malacañang is determined to sew up during her state visit to China next month.

Industrialist Raul T. Concepcion said the government should exercise fiscal prudence before undertaking big-ticket projects that would force it to pile up more foreign debt.

"I think we must undertake a very thorough feasibility study on this project," Concepcion said. "If someone is lending us [money] for a project, it doesn't mean we should accept the offer and undertake the project no matter the cost."

The 32.138-km North Rail project is expected to cost $503 million to be borrowed from the Export-Import Bank of China ($395 million) and commercial banks ($108 million). The loans would cover only the first section of the railway's first phase from Caloocan City up to Malolos, Bulacan. The project's next stage would extend it up to the Clark economic zone in Pampanga, the President's home province.

At today's peso-dollar exchange rate of P56:$1, the project would cost over P880,000,000 per kilometer.

But Malacañang appeared to be dead-set on implementing the North Rail project despite criticism its cost would be too prohibitive.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the North Rail project was a "vital linchpin" in two of the President's 10-point agenda for national progress—the decentralization of development and the decongestion of Metro Manila.

"China is helping us in this effort and we are further sealing this partnership," said Bunye in a statement. The North Rail project will be on top of the President's agenda during her state visit to Beijing on Sept. 2-3.

Concepcion suggested the government make sure the rail project could repay its debts at no or very minimal cost to the government.

Fischer said to have Pinoy family; RP asylum sought

BAGUIO CITY—Filipino chess grandmaster Eugene Torre has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to grant American grandmaster Bobby Fischer asylum in the Philippines, saying that Fischer had a family here.

"I spoke to (First Gentleman Jose Miguel) Arroyo and I asked him to raise the possibility of Bobby's asylum here. There is a good reason. He has a wife and child here. He wanted them out of the limelight because he was afraid the US might try to get to him through his (Filipino) family," Torre told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Fischer is being held in Japan after he tried to leave the country on June 16 to come to the Philippines. Officials at Narita International Airport detained him for using a canceled US passport.

Fischer is wanted in the US where he was indicted for violating sanctions against Yugoslavia. Fischer played a match against Russian Boris Spassky in 1992 in Yugoslav.

Antero Pobre, chair of the Philippine Chess Aficionados and Masters Association Inc. (PhiCama), said the group will picket the US and Japanese embassies on Tuesday to assert Fischer's rights.

"No nation has the right to sanction any individual player (for playing any game in any part of the world). Sports is apolitical," Pobre said in a telephone interview.

Pobre said PhiCama is trying to rally other chess clubs to join its protest. Close to 500 chess clubs exist in the Philippines although only about 100 of these are accredited, he said.

"But 100 chess clubs can add their voices to our clamor to (Malacañang) to give Bobby asylum in the Philippines," Pobre said.

Torre said he tried to ask Fischer to allow his Filipino wife and child to surface and appeal for his asylum.

"But Bobby does not want them to be in the spotlight. He is very paranoid about the international clout of America," Torre said.

He did not disclose the whereabouts of Fischer's family.

Fischer visited Manila, Baguio and Dagupan City in 2001 to broadcast a series of attacks against the US, the international Jewish community and his former allies, whom he blamed for the copyright theft of his works and his property.

Pablo Mercado, Bombo Radyo Baguio station manager, said he was not aware that Fischer had a family here, although he recalled seeing Fischer with women during his Philippine stay. Fischer made three separate visits to Baguio, he said. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Small firms hike gas prices today

THREE independent oil firms are raising the prices of their gasoline and diesel fuel by 35 centavos a liter today after the world prices of finished products hit historic highs.

Industry officials said yesterday Unioil Petroleum Philippines Corp., Eastern Petroleum Corp. and Flying V would charge the new prices between 6 a.m. today and midnight tonight.

As of press time, the Big Three oil companies—Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc.—had not announced price changes but they are expected to follow suit in a matter of days.

Fernando L. Martinez, Eastern Petroleum Corp. chair, said the prices of imported gasoline and diesel had reached $51 dollars a barrel—the highest level in 24 years.

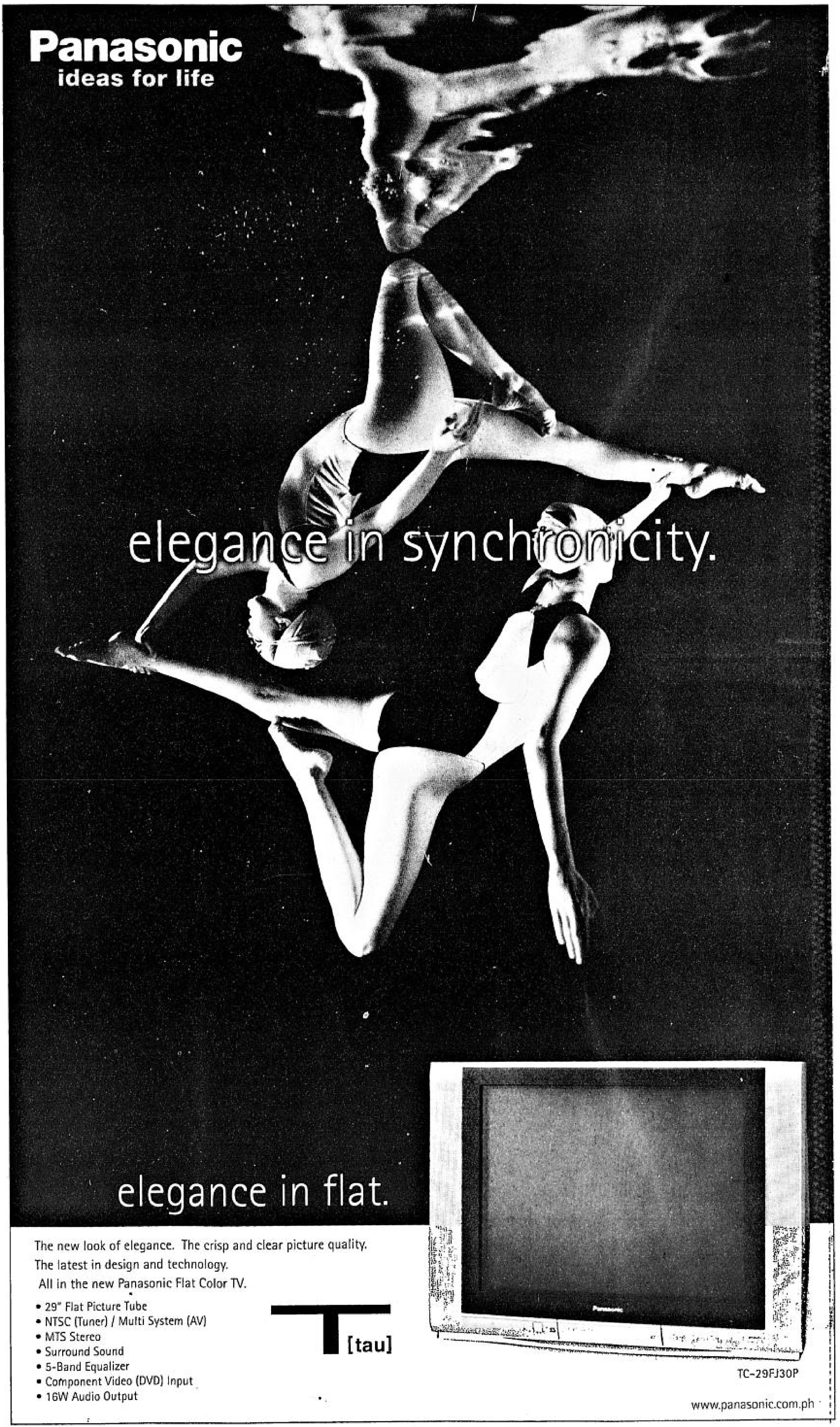
"For this month alone, prices have gone up by P1.50 a liter," Martinez said. "But it is impossible for us (local oil companies) to raise pump prices by that much."

He said oil firms would resort to smaller but more frequent price increases to recover costs.

Flying V director Macky Lopez said his company expected to hike prices by 30 centavos to 50 centavos a liter at midnight tonight.

Lopez said the latest increase was due to the oil companies' having accumulated "under-recoveries," which means they were absorbing part of increased costs in the world market.

In industry parlance, increased costs are under-recovered if these are not reflected in pump prices. *Ronnel W. Domingo*



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Got a question on sex? DOH hotline has the answer

By TJ Burgonio

GOT QUESTIONS on sex but were afraid to ask?

If you want quick and accurate information, all you have to do is call, text or e-mail the Department of Health's FamPlan hotline.

"This is a mechanism for widening access to information [on health issues] so people can have an informed choice," Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said Friday at the soft-launch of the hotline at the DOH office in Manila.

"This would enable couples—married ones or those in a conjugal union—to have better information about their reproductive situation," he said.

FamPlan provides answers to queries on a wide range of health issues, including fertility, reproductive health and, yes, family planning methods. It can be accessed by landline at 522-0176; by text at 0917-8326756; and by e-mail at famplan@info.com.ph.

It is manned by four counselors, consisting of two psychologists and two midwives, who are experts in their fields. They will answer sex questions from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day, except Sunday.

At the launch, reporters were invited to call in or text questions to FamPlan. One reporter called the landline number and asked if withdrawal during sex was an effective family planning method.

She got this reply from a counselor: "No, we don't consider it an effective method . . . because fluid comes out of the male organ even before the man ejaculates."

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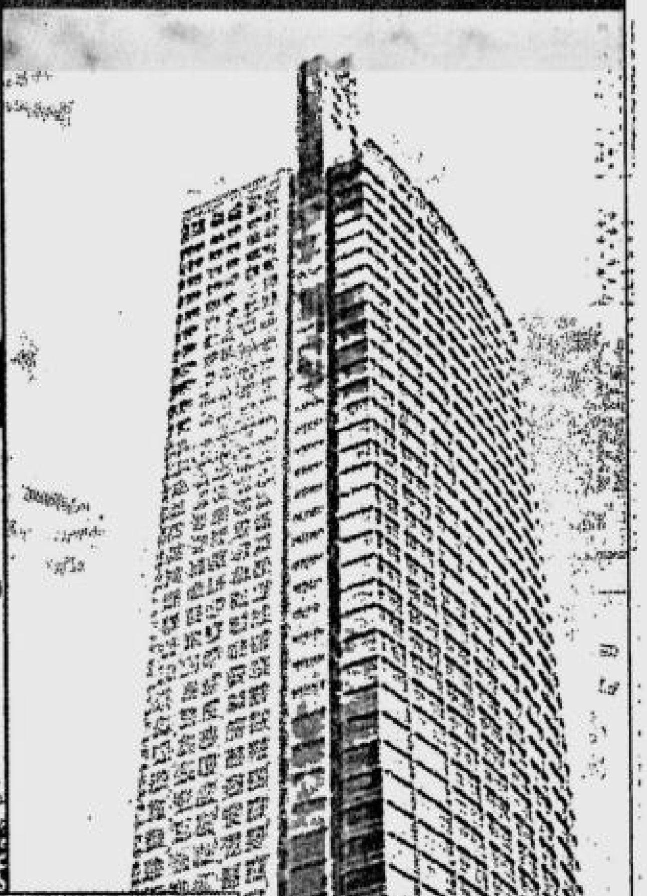

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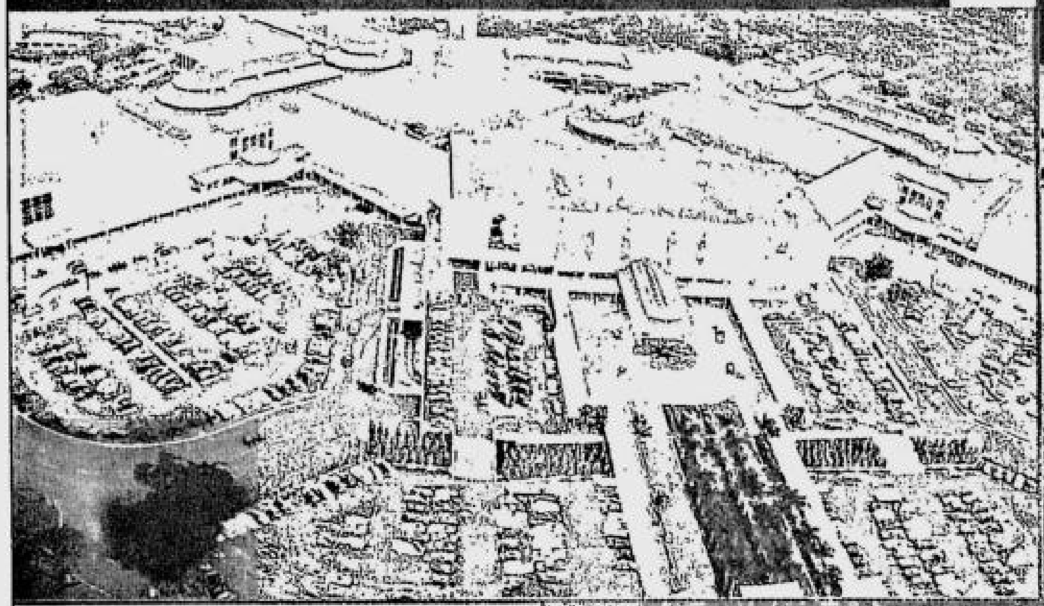

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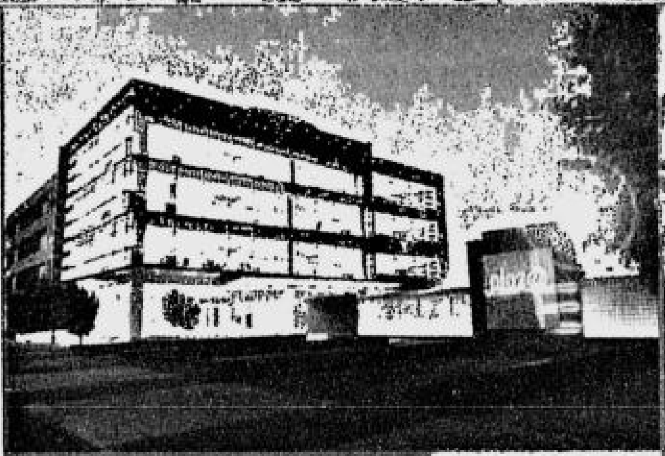

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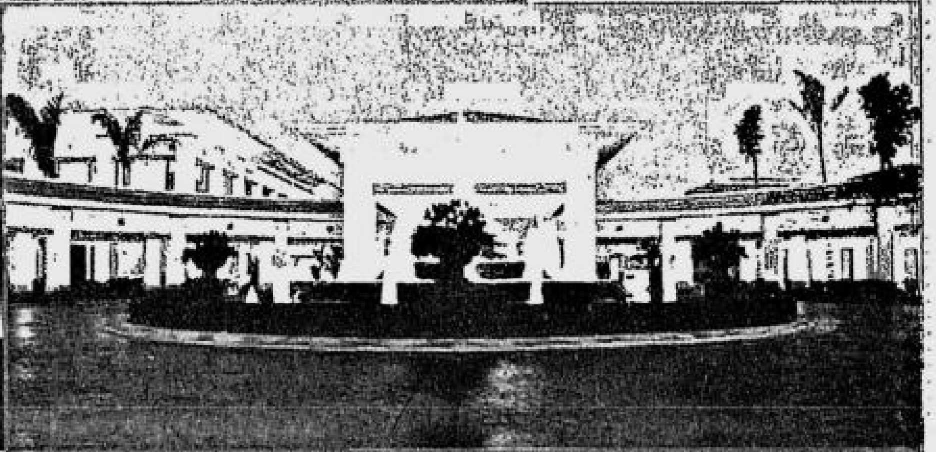

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Explosions kill 10 as Iraq political conference opens

Renewed fighting seen in Najaf after talks collapse

BAGHDAD—Blasts rocked Baghdad on Sunday as Iraqi leaders met to pick an assembly to oversee their interim government, highlighting the problems the country faces on its stuttering road to democracy.

Three mortar bombs hit a commuter bus station in central Baghdad on Sunday afternoon, killing about 10 people and injuring about 15 others, police Lt. Yasser Fawaz said.

The opening of the conference also came under the prospect of renewed fighting in the holy city of Najaf, where Shiite militiamen were in a standoff with US and Iraqi forces after the collapse of peace talks aimed at ending fighting that has killed hundreds and threatened to undermine the authority of interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.

Mehdi militia of radical Shiite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr roamed the streets and police chief Ghaleb al-Jazaeri told all media to leave the southern city by midday, citing security concerns. He did not elaborate.

Under tight security and a curfew in parts of Baghdad, 1,300 political and religious leaders gathered for a three-day conference in the fortified Green Zone compound to choose the 100-member assembly.

The assembly, or national council, will oversee the interim government until elections are held in January.

"Your presence here today is the biggest challenge to the forces of darkness that want to tear this country apart. This is not the end of the road, it is the first step on the way to democracy," Allawi said in opening remarks.

Police have blocked off roads and closed at least one bridge over the nearby Tigris River to try to prevent insurgents disrupting the event.

The conference has been beset by boycotts from key players such as Sadr and the Muslim Clerics Association, an influential grouping of Sunni religious leaders.

The conference was due to open in late July but was delayed after the United Nations demanded more time for preparations.

Some delegates taking part have accused the government of stacking the slate with Allawi supporters.

"The political parties in power now have the overwhelming majority of delegates. They left no room for independents," said Mohammed Bahr al-Uloum, a leading Shiite cleric and a former president of the now defunct Iraqi Governing Council.

Government officials have said Iraqi and US forces would resume military operations against the Mehdi Army in Najaf.

There was at least one minor skirmish on Sunday but no major attack.

Sadr has vowed to fight to the death.

The fighting in Najaf has spread to seven other Shiite cities in southern and central Iraq.

An uneasy truce has held there since Friday, when US troops and tanks loosened their noose around the Imam Ali Mosque and a vast ancient cemetery nearby. *Reuters/AP*

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Dutch soldier killed in Iraq, 5 badly hurt

AMSTERDAM—A Dutch soldier was killed and five seriously wounded in a shooting incident on Saturday evening in Iraq, the Dutch defense ministry said.

The ministry said in a statement early on Sunday the shooting probably began with an attack on a military vehicle in the southern town of Ar Rumaythah, where some of the around 1,200 Dutch troops stationed in Iraq are based.

A ministry spokesperson said this was the second death of a Dutch soldier in Iraq after another was killed in May. The dead man was a 29-year-old member of the military police.

The ministry said the five wounded, one from the military police and four from the army, were out of danger and their condition was stable. Several other soldiers were slightly wounded. It is not yet clear who carried out the attack.

After the shooting, rapid reaction forces and Apache helicopters were engaged, while a US Black Hawk helicopter helped with the medical evacuation.

Some time after the incident, the Dutch camp came under fire but no soldiers were hurt. The Dutch military police is investigating the attack.

Parliament recently extended the mission of the Dutch troops, who are mainly stationed near the southern town of Samawa, which has been peaceful compared to other parts of Iraq.

Ar Rumaythah is just north of Samawa.

Japanese soldiers are also based near Samawa in the first deployment of Japan's military in an overseas combat zone since World War II. *Reuters*

US to bring home 70,000 troops from Europe, Asia

SIOUX CITY, Iowa—President Geroge W. Bush has decided to bring home tens of thousands of US troops from posts around the world—most of them in Europe and Asia—plus 100,000 of their family members and support personnel, US officials said.

The changes will have no effect on forces in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Bush will announce the move Monday in a speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars convention in Cincinnati, two senior administration officials said Saturday.

As part of the largest troop realignment in years, Bush will shift about 70,000 uniformed military personnel, most of them currently in Europe, the senior officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity. A significant proportion will come home, though it was not clear when.

US armed forces stationed aboard, other than Iraq and Afghanistan, now number about 200,000, of whom 100,000 are based in Europe. The Pentagon advised German officials earlier this year that it was considering removing two Army divisions from Germany and replacing them with smaller, more mobile units.

The decision is meant to "strengthen our ability to respond to threats overseas," one official said, declining to elaborate. *AP*

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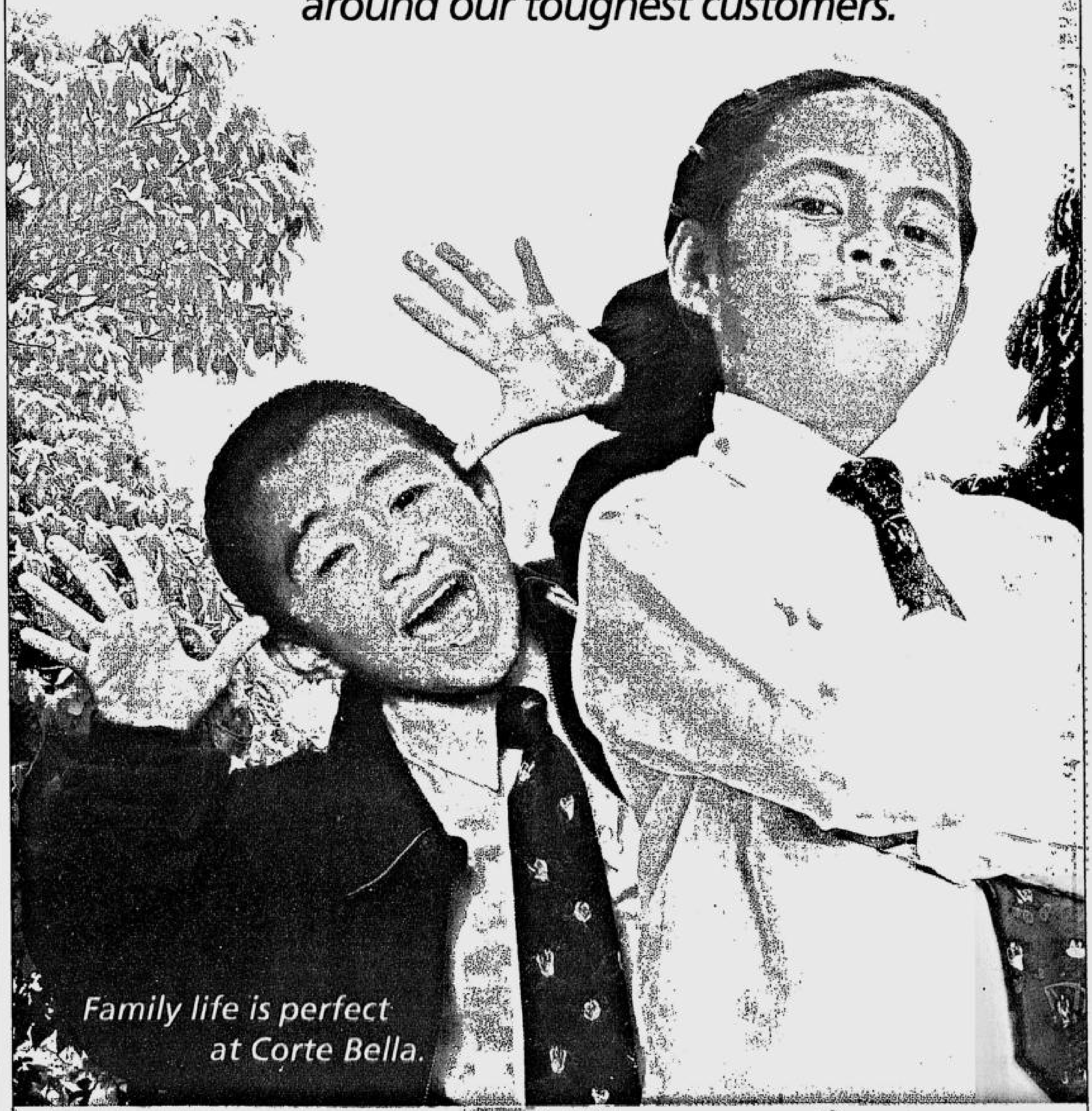
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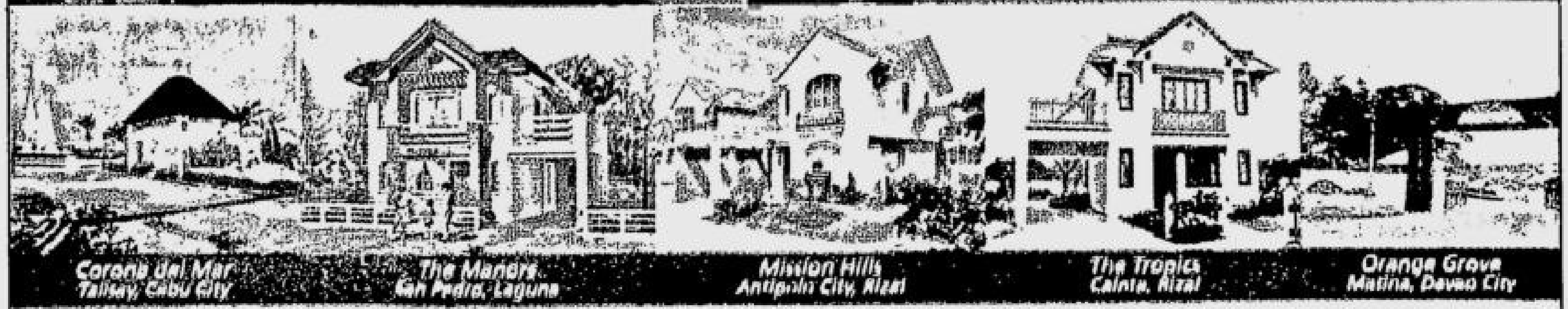

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Olympics security a 'terrorist's dream,' says British paper

LONDON—Security at the Athens Olympics is a terrorist's dream, a British newspaper said on Saturday after an undercover reporter was able to plant three suspicious packages undetected.

Greece, which has spent an unprecedented one billion euros on Games security, attacked the paper's ethics and said the reporter was inspired by crime fiction.

The Sunday Mirror tabloid said reporter Bob Graham also used a bogus job as a driver to wander round the main stadium with passes in the names of "Michael Mouse" and "Robert bin Laden," and to get near world leaders at Friday's opening ceremony.

"Security is absolutely disgraceful. The Games are a terrorist's dream come true," Graham said in a Mirror statement.

"Given assurances from the authorities and the resources available, it is a scandal on an Olympic scale."

For the first Summer Olympics since the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, Athens has spent four times more on security than Sydney did in 2000, and security personnel outnumber athletes seven to one.

Greece's Public Order Minister George Voulgarakis reacted angrily to the claims, saying the article was a "profound insult to journalism and the principles of objective and responsible reporting."

"I would recommend to Mr. Graham to read fewer detective novels," he said in a statement.

The Mirror, using an exposé tactic popular with Britain's tabloids, said it launched its investigation five weeks ago when Graham took a driving job with a British contractor. *Reuters*

PM says China practices attack on Taiwan capital

TAIPEI—China has been practicing an attack on Taiwan's capital, Taipei, aimed at killing or capturing the island's leaders in a "decapitation" action, Taiwan Premier Yu Shyi-kun said on Sunday.

The strategy appeared to have been inspired by the US action in Iraq to capture Saddam Hussein, said a senior military official.

Tensions have been running high in the Taiwan Strait as China prepares for a possible military showdown, convinced Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian will push for formal statehood during his second term, which began in May.

Both sides are holding annual war games. China, which views the island as a renegade province, has been staging mock invasion drills while Taiwan's military has pretended to fend off such an attack.

Yu said Beijing began to simulate an attack targeting Taiwan leaders after the capture of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

"After the Iraq war, China has targeted Taiwan leaders, Taiwan's capital, and the presidential office in its so-called decapitation action," Yu said aboard a plane to Central America after a stopover in Los Angeles, where he met some US congressmen.

"Their internal discussions and recent drills indicated they have been preparing for such a move," Yu said in comments broadcast on Taiwan cable news network TVBS.

Military spokesperson Huang Suey-sheng said China's decapitation tactic could include capturing or killing the island's president and firing missiles at the presidential office in central Taipei.

"The moves by the United States, including the capture of Hussein, during the second Gulf War likely have inspired Communist China," Huang said. "Communist China has never given up attacking Taiwan and its current strategy is aimed at winning the war at the first strike," Huang said.

"'Decapitation' is definitely an option for its future military actions against Taiwan," Huang said.

Taiwan could withstand an attack from Beijing for two weeks, the China Times quoted military sources as saying last week, in comments seen aimed at assuaging fears raised by a computer simulation showing Taipei could be captured in six days.

The assumption is the United States, Taiwan's biggest arms supplier, would meet its treaty obligations and come to the island's defense by exerting diplomatic pressure on China, intelligence aid or actual combat assistance.

Military experts say China is accelerating its arms build-up in preparation for war, but its 2.5-million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA) still lacks sophisticated amphibious vessels to turn it into a credible invasion force. *Reuters*

Pupils among 16 killed in India blasts

GUWAHATI, India—Separatist rebels killed 16 people, mostly schoolchildren, in India on Sunday and wounded dozens in bomb and grenade attacks on independence day ceremonies in the troubled northeast and disputed Kashmir.

The children were taking part in a parade in the insurgency-racked oil and tea-rich state of Assam when a powerful bomb ripped through a college ground, police said.

"Suddenly there was an explosion, it left a deep crater," said police inspector general Khagen Sharma. At least 20 people were wounded.

Several underground guerrilla groups fighting Indian rule in the northeast had called for a boycott of the independence celebrations, saying it was a black day. The rebels accuse New Delhi of plundering the region's rich resources. *Reuters*

13 dead in Florida hurricane

PUNTA GORDA, Florida—Emergency personnel toiled through a second night early Sunday after Hurricane Charley cut a swath of death and destruction across Florida, trashing thousands of homes and businesses, tearing up trees and power poles and killing at least 13.

Law enforcement officials confirmed 13 dead statewide late Saturday, with search and rescue operations ongoing, Matt Mitchell of the state emergency operations center told AFP.

Four of the confirmed dead were in Charlotte County, which includes this blue collar and retirement town, where ubiquitous mobile home parks were flattened to grotesque pastel carpets of twisted aluminum.

Streets and highways were littered with the wreckage of vehicles sent tumbling like toys by the wind that raked across the state late Friday.

Rescue workers said the death toll was sure to rise as they worked their way through debris in search of survivors and bodies.

They said they had ordered 60 body bags for one trailer court alone in Punta Gorda, a sleepy community nestled on Charlotte Harbor off the Gulf of Mexico that took the brunt of the storm's vicious force.

"Punta Gorda appears to be ground zero," said Craig Fugate, Florida Director of Emergency Management. *AFP*

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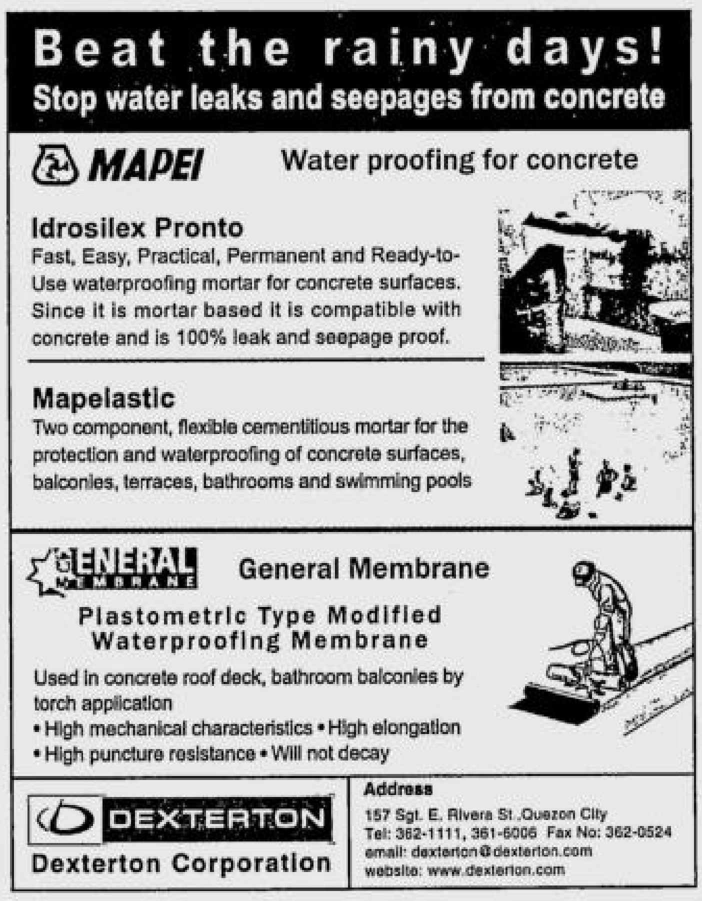

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Pope in Lourdes: Respect the ill, old

LOURDES, France—Pope John Paul, calling himself a sick man among the sick, visited the world's premier Roman Catholic "miracle shrine" on Saturday and urged society not to cast aside the old and the suffering.

The 84-year-old Pope, racked by Parkinson's disease and arthritis, looked weak on the first day of a 32-hour trip to the southwestern French city where the Madonna is said to have appeared to the peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.

His frailty was evident throughout the day. He read his airport arrival address to President Jacques Chirac slowly.

Later at the famous grotto where the visions are said to have taken place aides had rested him on a kneeler to pray but he lost his balance and nearly fell over. They rushed up to prevent him from falling.

After several minutes of intense prayer, he designated a cardinal to read his address for him, even though it was only four paragraphs long.

"With you I share a time marked by physical suffering, yet not for that reason any less fruitful in God's wondrous plan," he said.

Later, he had difficulty pronouncing his brief address to tens of thousands of people at an evening candlelight procession around the shrine which some 6 million people visit each year, many of them sufferers who pray for miracle cures as they drink holy waters. He took three sips of holy water on Saturday.

The Church has recognized 66 cases of what it calls miraculous healings among the thousands of pilgrims who have said they left Lourdes free of their ailments. *Reuters*

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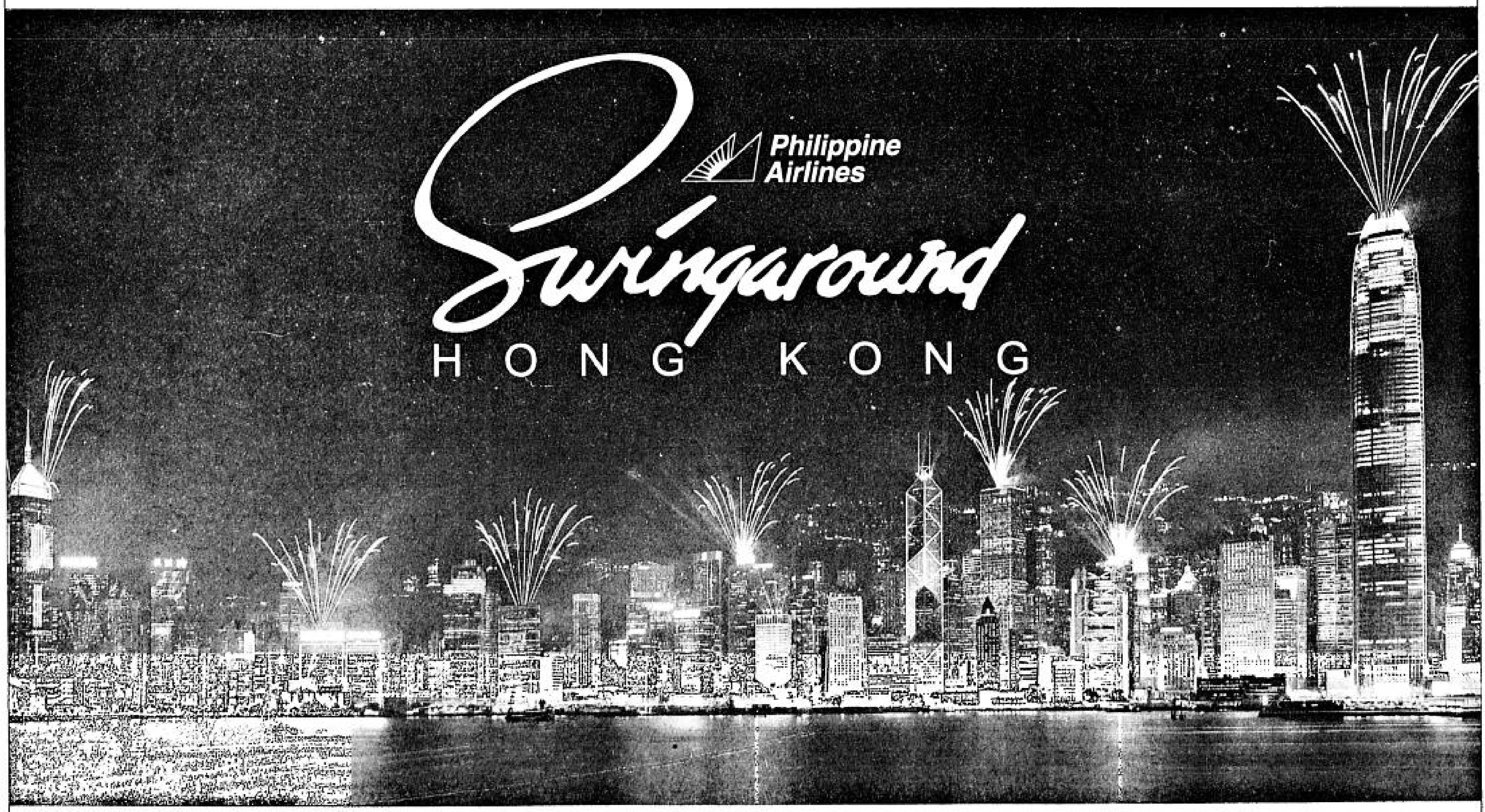

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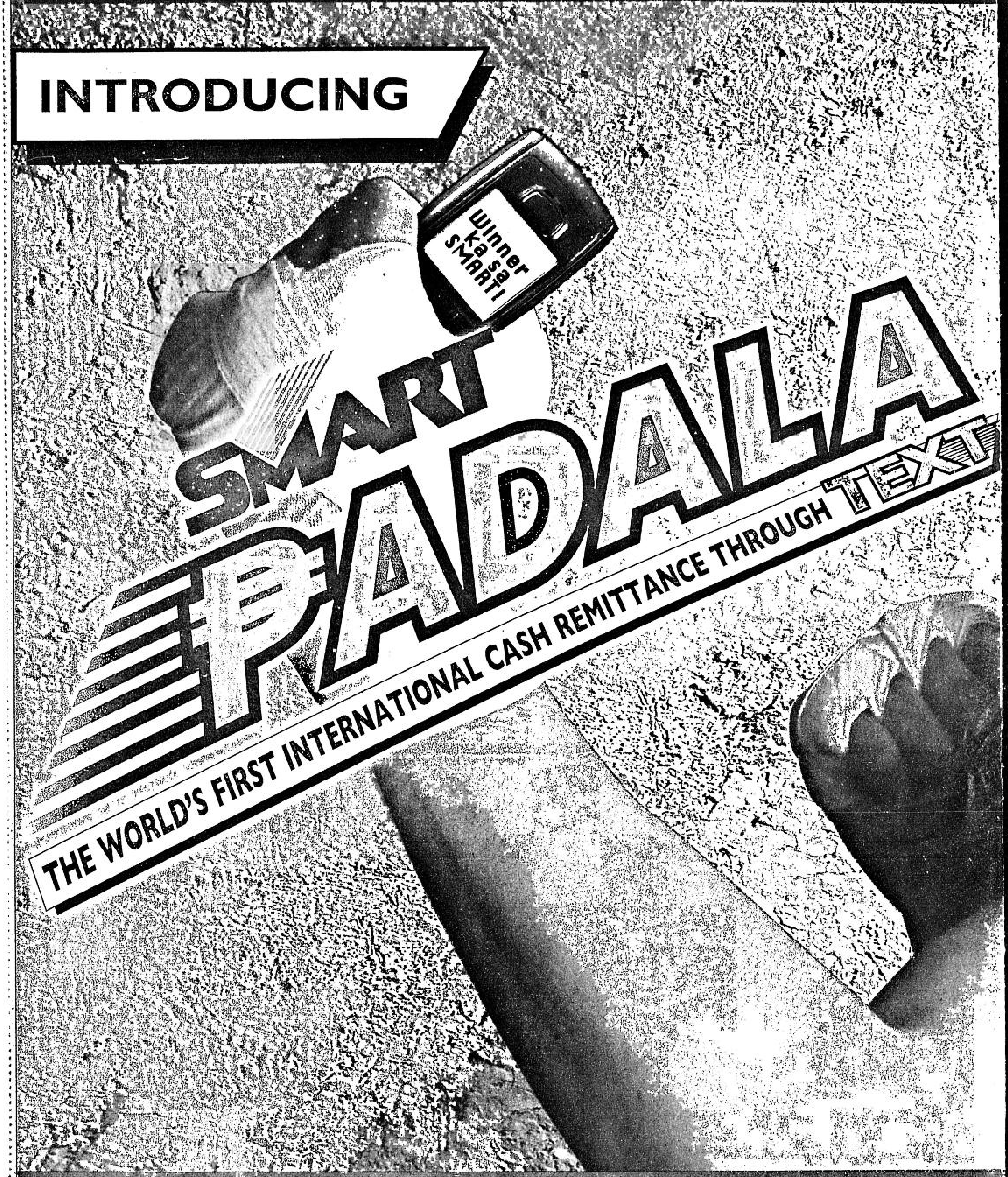
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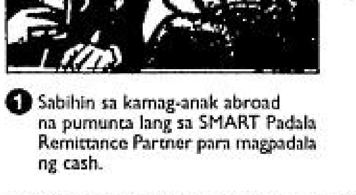
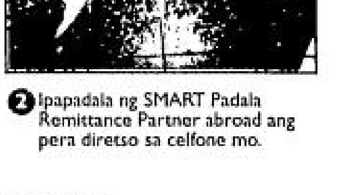


① Sabihin sa kamag-anak abroad na pumunta lang sa SMART Padala Remittance Partner para magpadala ng cash.



② Ipapadala ng SMART Padala Remittance Partner abroad ang pera diretso sa celfone mo.

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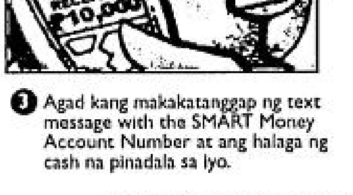
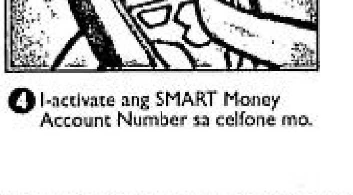


③ Agad kang makakatanggap ng text message with the SMART Money Account Number at ang halaga ng cash na pinadala sa iyo.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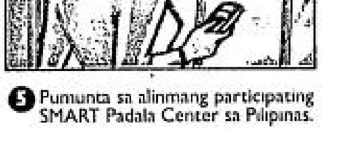
④ I-activate ang SMART Money Account Number sa celfone mo.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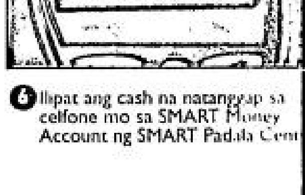
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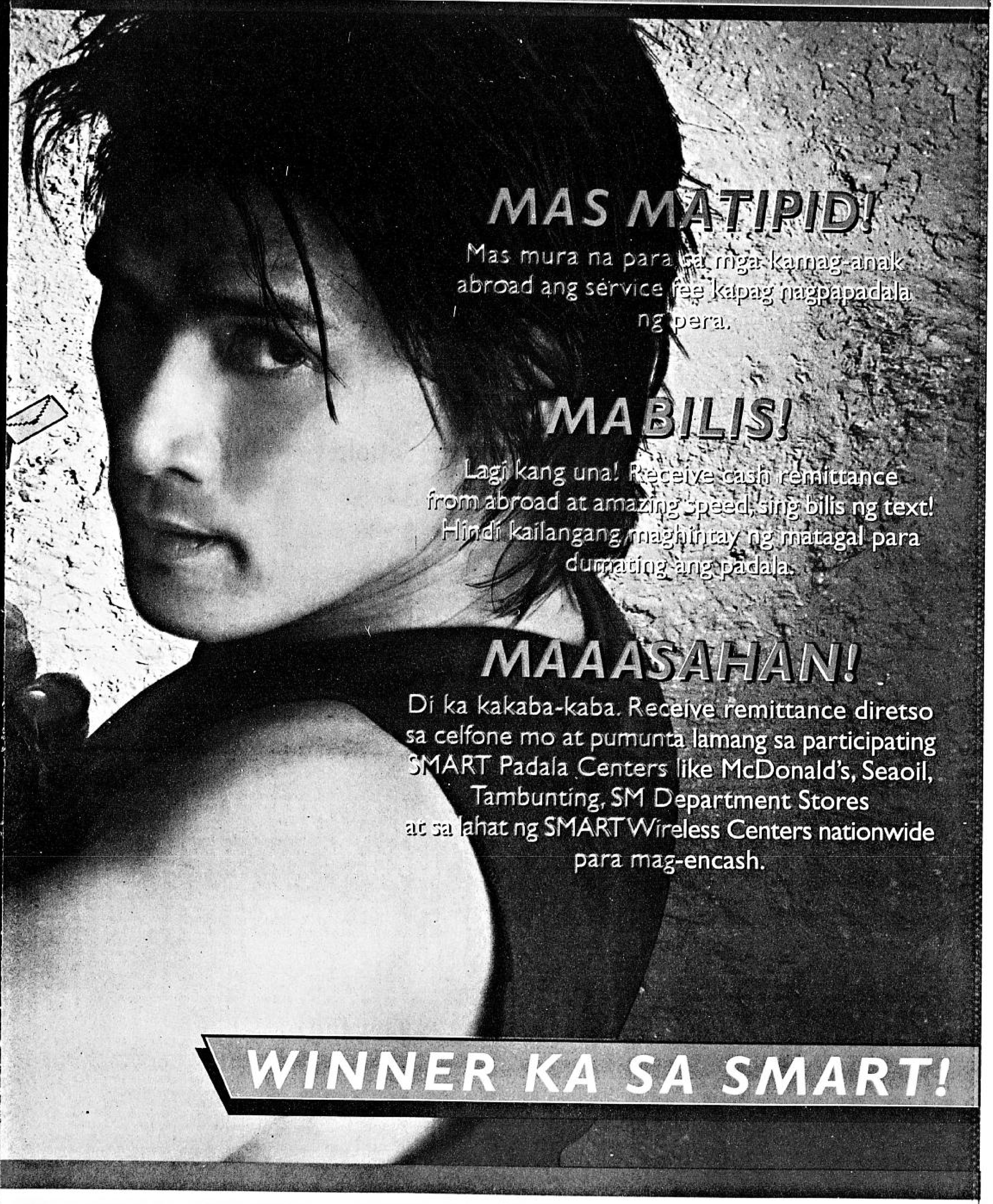

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Text power

EDITORIAL

LET it not be said that, under the new Ombudsman, the government's main graft-busting agency is afraid of new ideas. In recent weeks, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo's office has shown a welcome openness of mind, a willingness to think out of the proverbial box.

Sometime ago, the agency announced a collaborative program with select media organizations. The object: to learn the techniques of investigative journalism, to help build airtight cases against corrupt public officials. Then last week, the agency announced its "text power" program, essentially a bank of cell phone-based hotlines designed to gather leads about wrongdoing and misconduct.

"Some people are too afraid to report anomalies in cases where their identities can be traced," Assistant Ombudsman Ernesto Nocos told reporters. "It is easier to report graft when you don't have to identify yourself."

The new system's principal advantage lies precisely in the anonymity that the cell phone can offer. (Technically, leads may come not only in Short Messaging System or text format, but even in the newer Multimedia Messaging System format: pictures or video captured on camera phones.)

The still-to-be-launched system has a secondary advantage: nationwide, even global, reach. The Ombudsman deploys only 17 graft investigators to keep watch over a bureaucracy of 1.5 million government employees, an untenable ratio of one for every 88,000. "Right now, our hands are full. Our manpower is inadequate," Nocos said. In theory, the "text power" program can effectively raise the ratio by dramatically extending the investigators' reach. A Filipino nurse in Houston, Texas, or a Filipino engineer in Dubai, for instance, can report a traveling official's suspicious shopping binge directly to the Office of the Ombudsman, at a cost of only a few pesos per message.

Agency officials have waxed expansive about the possibility that the system will allow citizens (as Friday's news story phrased it) to "report graft as it occurs"—that is to say, report the crime the very moment it is being committed. This is an ideal that unobtrusive technology (a cell phone hidden in the palm of one's hand, a camera phone that can take pictures from many angles) has put within reach.

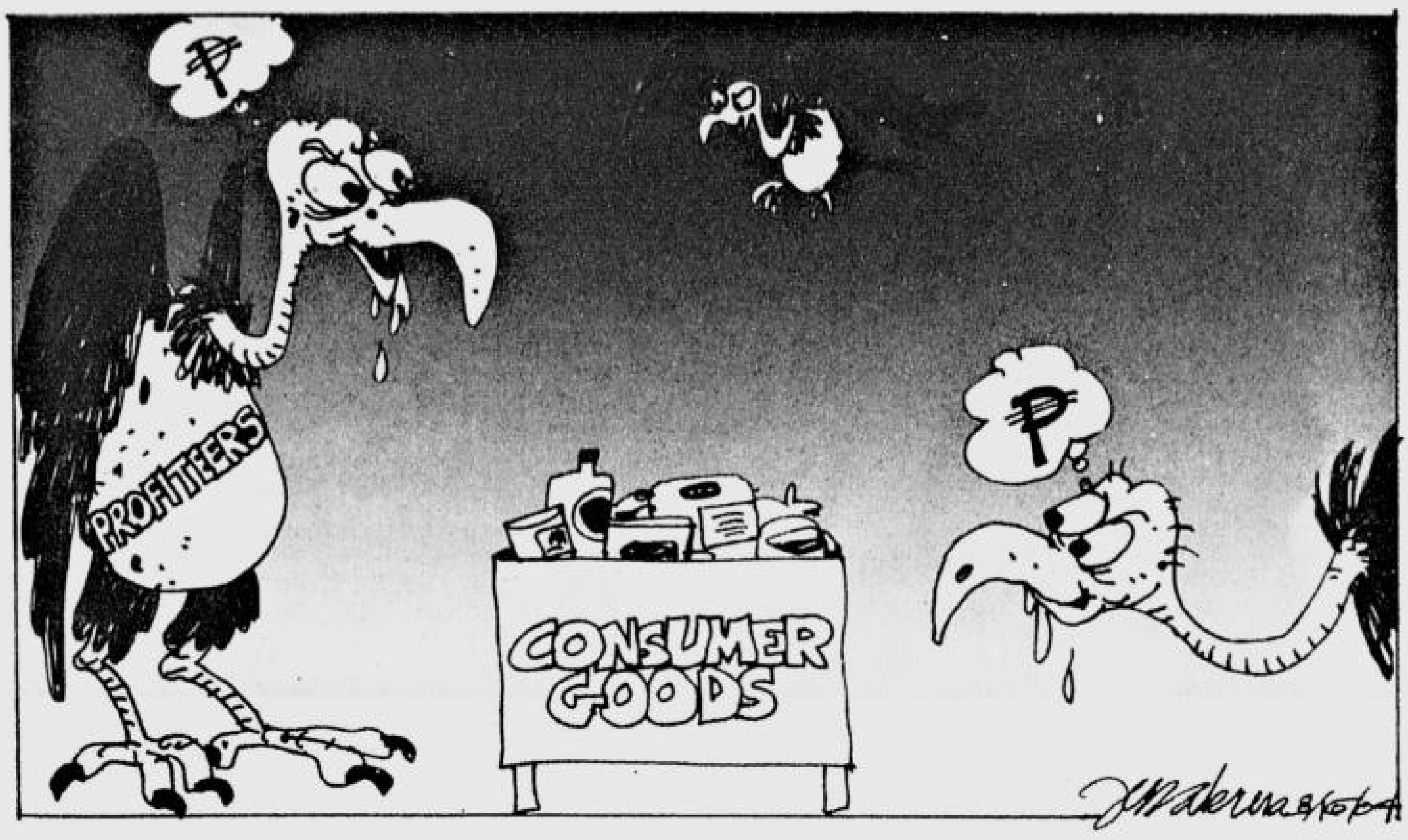
But texting a lead is one thing, filing a solid case is another.

The agency would need to verify every single tip, separating the detailed from the vague, the useful from the useless, the fact from the rumor, the true from the fabricated or imagined or devoutly wished for. How the Ombudsman's office will do this is yet unclear. Even if only five percent of the country's 24 million cell phone users (a fair response rate, if we go by direct marketing standards) report a lead in a given year, that's 1.2 million messages—about 3,300 a day—that graft investigators have to sort through. Even if only one percent of the leads in a given year result in the filing of cases, that's still 12,000 new cases: about a thousand a month.

A first look at the numbers thus reveals the proposed system's chief disadvantage: It may raise the public's expectations, only to fail them. The promise of greater citizen participation offered by the new technology is real; ordinary people can do their civic duty by reporting what they suspect to be a crime or the fruits of criminal behavior to the Ombudsman.

But the promise of government action may be more apparent than real. If the new system results in a thousand new cases, but the number of graft investigators remains pitiful, then the Ombudsman will not be—cannot be—in a position to meet the public's raised expectations. It is not enough that the new system allows citizens to help fight corruption, under cover of anonymity. The system must not only make the agency more accessible; it must also make it more accountable. Otherwise the result will be as predictable as it is bleak: a frustrated public, giving up on yet another noble-sounding government initiative.

This is not to say that the Ombudsman's openness of mind will come to nothing but grief, only that provisions must be taken to manage expectations. Technology alone cannot be the answer.



The controversial Smokey Mountain Project

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

ALTHOUGH Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago didn't mention former Solicitor General Frank Chavez even once in her privilege speech on the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project, her exposé was identical to the petition filed by Chavez last Aug. 5 before the Supreme Court. I secured a copy of the inch-thick petition, together with copies of the contracts and other supporting documents.

In brief, the petition seeks to declare null and void the Joint Venture Agreement among the National Housing Authority, the R-II Builders Inc., and the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation Project.

The project envisioned the conversion of the Smokey Mountain garbage dump into a housing project, the reclamation of foreshore lands near the dump, and the development of a commercial and industrial zone on the reclaimed area.

The project was conceived in 1988, during the term of President Corazon Aquino, but it was during the term of President Fidel Ramos, who assumed office in 1992, that its implementation went in earnest. R-II Builders was granted the award to develop the former dumpsite through contract negotiations.

Ramos, however, imposed the condition that the project should be at "no cost to the government." R-II agreed to fully finance the development of the dumpsite into a medium-rise housing complex and industrial/commercial site, as well as reclaim and develop 40 hectares of foreshore land. Since R-II was not to be paid for its work, the reclaimed land was to be its payment.

However, like the contracts for the PEA-Amari reclamation project and Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport—both of which were nullified by the Supreme Court—the NHA-R-II contract was likewise amended several times.

In these amendments, the area to be reclaimed was increased from the original 40 hectàres to 79 hectares, and the commercial area to be given to R-II was likewise increased from 1.3 hectares to 2.3 hectares. In a later amendment, R-II was given the right to reclaim an additional 119 hectares of foreshore land. This was supposed to be the payment to R-II for the installation of an incinerator to burn garbage. In still another amendment, the area to be reclaimed in Phase 2 of the project was no longer specified, hence unlimited.

However, after constructing a few low-cost housing buildings, R-II ran out of money to fund the project. To finance it, R-II entered into an Asset Pool Arrangement with the NHA, Philippine National Bank and the Home Insurance and Guarantee Corp. Various government agencies pooled assets to bankroll the project despite the agreement that R-II would fully finance it. As payment, these agencies were issued Smokey Mountain Project Participation Certificates.

Thus, the government ended up financing the project, contrary to the original agreement. NHA and R-II would share in the proceeds of the project on a 56:40 scheme in favor of NHA.

Investors in the Asset Pool as of July 31, 2003 were:

1. Social Security System (P1.39 billion); 2. Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (P835 million); 3. LandBank (P124 million); 4. Home Guarantee Corp. (P350 million); 5. HGC Provident Fund (P30 million) 6. PNB (P300 million); 7. Phil. Amusement and Gaming Corp. (P6 million)

8. Other financial institutions (P473 million).

When the Clean Air Act was approved on June 23, 1994, the incinerator project was abandoned. Nevertheless, R-II was still given the right to reclaim an additional 150 hectares of foreshore land "for services rendered".

Despite the Asset Pool, funds were still insufficient for the project. So in August 2000, NHA conveyed other property into the pool. From the Asset Pool, 10 hectares of land were transferred to Harbour Centre, which has operating harbor facilities in the project site. The fair market value of the reclaimed land was P1.75 billion. In exchange, the pool got P607 billion worth of common shares and 1.143 preferred shares of Harbour. The common shares translated into 60 percent of the total 1.012 voting shares in said corporation.

However, through other transactions, Reghis Romero II was able to dilute the pool's majority stockholdings. R-II Builders and R-II Holdings now hold 28 percent and 40 percent of common shares, respectively, in Harbour Centre.

In the end, Romero was able to own majority shares in Harbour. R-II Builders and R-II Holdings own 28 percent and 40 percent voting shares of Harbour, respectively.

In seeking the annulment of the contract, Chavez argues that

1. Neither NHA nor R-II may reclaim foreshore land because they were never granted any authority to reclaim lands of the pubic domain as this power is vested exclusively in the Public Estates Authority.

2. R-II Builders can't acquire reclaimed foreshore land because they are inalienable public lands beyond the commerce of man. Assuming the reclaimed lands were declared alienable and disposable, R-II still cannot acquire the same because there was never any declaration that these lands were no longer needed for public use. Assuming that these lands are no longer needed for public use, R-II still can't acquire them because there was never any law authorizing the sale. There was never any public bidding awarding ownership of these lands to R-II Builders. Assuming that all requirements for a valid transfer of alienable public land had been performed, R-II Builders, being a private company, is expressly prohibited by the Constitution to acquire lands of the public domain; and

3. Harbour Centre, being a private company, whose majority stocks are owned and controlled by Romero's companies, is disqualified from being a transferee of public land.

Low life

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I LISTENED with much amusement to the representatives debating the wisdom of conducting a congressional inquiry into some of their fellows being the beneficiaries of an escort service "serviced" by starlets. The consensus among the men was to drop the thing like a hot, well, potato. That included Bayan Muna representative Teddy Casiño who said diplomatically that it should first be established if there was any solid basis for it, otherwise, it would merely give rise to congressional grandstanding.

Margarito Teves in his turn made light of it, saying he too was opposed to an inquiry, but not out of a desire for self-preservation. He was at least certain, he said, he was not being alluded to. At his age, he said, the spirit might be willing but the flesh is weak. He did not say he could certainly not be accused of grandstanding.

Well, for once, I find myself in agreement with the congressmen—emphasis on the "men"—which is never easy to do. My only caveat is that if there is any inquiry at all, it should confine itself to ferreting out **not** who the beneficiaries of the escort service were, but what they paid the service escorts with. Whether it was money that came from their personal pockets or from their official budget, whether it was money that came under the category "disposable income" or under the rubric, "repair of manholes." I understand though that "manholes" has been banished from the official vocabulary for being offensive to women.

I did hear some of the starlets say on TV that they escorted not just congressmen but governors, mayors and sundry executive officials as well. Though, they added with much earnestness, they limited their services to "GRO-ing" and not much else. But they did say their clients were exceptionally generous, many of them offering gifts of jewelry and money, and proposing to keep them in plush condo units. I myself do not mind what congressmen, governors, and mayors do after dark, or well before it—they are past the age of reason, even if they rarely show it—but I do mind what they do with money that came from **my** hard work. I do not mind that they are generous in their philandering, but I do mind that they are prodigious in their plundering.

So if there must be an indictment, it should not be for the reason that the congressmen partook of the forbidden fruit but for the reason that they took our money and ran around with it. That is the only inquiry that makes sense—or that doesn't take more of our money and plays around with it.

But I agree with the congressmen who say this is best treated with benign indifference and shoved quietly into oblivion. It merely repeats the folly of the so-called "Brunei Beauties exposé" Ernesto Maceda regaled us with in the mid-1990s. It blows everything out of proportion. At the very least, Congress does not lack for things to inquire into, such as the extent of corruption in the pork barrel system, or the impending financial collapse of this country from mounting debt. Doctors who are trying to revive a dying patient may not pull away to treat someone with a common cold, however pretty she is.

As the "Brunei Beauties" experience also shows, cases like this have a way of drawing undue public attention to it, to the exclusion of much else. Scandals are always riveting, particularly in a country where an entire industry has been built to generate them—that is the current extent of this country's industrialization. If I remember right, the exploits of Congress' "Spice Boys" at Padi's Point—they were rumored to be picking up girls there—also ran a fairly lengthy course some years ago. Which did not ruin Padi's Point but helped it mightily to prosper. Scandals of this nature are the stuff of tabloids and show biz gossip, both of which tend to consume this country faster than consumption, or tuberculosis.

I have heard a couple of women representatives say: the fact that some of their colleagues are patronizing prostitution is something to be concerned about. That may be so. But I myself worry about our beaming the wrong message with witch hunts like this. It unleashes a kind of morals watch that has little to do with public service. A congressman who goes to Mass every Sunday and studiously avoids the whorehouse does not necessarily make a good public official. Not if he funnels taxpayers' money to his personal projects and votes for bills out of convenience rather than conscience. The only kind of morality I want to see from my congressman is the one that has to do with reasonable honesty and integrity and some degree of principle and courage. That is all I have a right to ask of him.

Between a congressman who doesn't patronize prostitutes but prostitutes himself to the highest bidder, and one who frequents unsavory dives but demands to know how much the president spent in taxpayers' money to campaign in the last elections, I'd always go for the second. Personal abstemiousness does not naturally translate into public virtue, it often translates only into scraggly greed. And libertinism does not naturally translate into moral turpitude, if often translates only into a spark of libertarianism.

Like I said, the only thing I'd be interested to know is whether a congressman proposes to pay for a townhouse unit for a starlet with his money or mine. Otherwise, I'd rather know who among the congressmen are constantly escorted to Malacañang for a meeting with Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo than those who are constantly escorted by pimps for a mating with Keanna Reeves. Some prostitutes are worse than others. The kind that sells their souls is worse than the one that sells their bodies.

Low life isn't always found in the streets.

Critical shortage of doctors by 2010

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

CERTAIN Department of Education employees belonging to its union are up against the reported plan of the President to replace Secretary Edilberto de Jesus with former Batanes representative and current Liberal Party president Florencio Abad as education secretary. They are asking for the retention of De Jesus, who reportedly wants to return to the private sector. If this is not possible, they would rather have another educator, "not a politician."

I agree that it's best to keep De Jesus at DepEd, so he can implement the "bridge program." But I also want to tell the DepEd people that if Abad replaces De Jesus, they won't be getting a bad deal.

* * *

Like former DepEd chief Raul Roco, Abad is a lawyer (from the Ateneo law school), and as we have seen in the past, at times it's better to get a non-educator as he can bring a fresh outlook to the department. Moreover, Abad is not one of the regular run of cheap politicians; he enjoys a lot of support from civil society that has been quite leery of "politicians." Serving three terms in Congress with distinction, intelligence and maturity, he was among the House's most sober and articulate members. Proof of this was the fact that he was a favorite resource person of the media during the congressional canvassing. The DepEd people should give Abad a chance to prove himself.

* * *

At the dzRH program on poverty alleviation measures that Cecile Alvarez and I co-host every Sunday evening, we had as guest Dr. Josefina Almonte, chair of the Department of Surgery of the Philippine General Hospital, who recounted the various successful operations undertaken by PGH and other hospitals to separate Filipino conjoined twins. Dr. Almonte, a UP College of Medicine Class '72 graduate who trained in Australia, stressed that the expertise to do operations on cases similar to that of the Aguirre twins is locally available, but the problem is funding; the doctors donate their services but the sad thing is that they still have to solicit funds for the other expenses, which is a shame.

* * *

But what caught our interest particularly was Almonte's remark that the medical profession here is in serious peril of losing its doctors, as many of them go to the United States to work as nurses because of the easy recruitment and the much bigger pay abroad. She noted that senior medical residents here earn about P7,000 to P8,000 a month, whereas in the United States, as nurses, they can easily earn $26 an hour. Almonte said that enrollment in medical schools here has dropped in recent years because of this situation, and in fact, a recent Department of Health study showed that if the exodus of our physicians is not arrested, the country will be experiencing a critical shortage of about 18,000 doctors by 2010.

* * *

Almonte's story jibes with the story in yesterday's INQUIRER, about Southern Leyte Governor Rosette Lerias' alarm over the fact that 13 of the 15 doctors in her province's Integrated Hospital Office are taking up nursing courses on the side, preparatory to leaving for the United States. Gov. Lerias was quoted as saying she'd appeal to the doctors to value service to the people more than the potential of earning more money in the US. Chief of hospitals Dr. Leonardo Eway admitted, too, that three district hospitals in the province need about 15 doctors, "but sad to admit, there are no takers." PGH's Dr. Almonte opines that as a short-term solution, hospitals could review their salary scales, so that health service doesn't become such a missionary effort on the medical people's part. But of course, hospitals' ability to raise salaries is also affected by the patients' ability to pay their bills.

The exodus of our doctors is a serious problem that has to be addressed before it assumes "epidemic" proportions.

* * *

Recently my husband's driver was apprehended by a yellow-uniformed Makati traffic aide bearing the name "R. Gregorio" on his name plate. **Gregorio said the government car the driver was using had a plate number not allowed in Makati at that time. The driver showed his government ID and the exemption that MMDA granted my husband, but the aide arrogantly ignored them, saying that MMDA's exemptions are worthless there. Demanding his license, the traffic aide walked away with it without issuing a violation ticket, as the law requires, but not before shouting that if he wanted his license back, he had to fork out P300. The driver got the impression that if he did fork out P300 (which he didn't have), it would have gone to the aide's pocket.**

* * *

Next morning I offered to go with him to the traffic bureau's office so he could file a complaint and I could verify whether the MMDA exemption, which I also carry, is indeed not honored in Makati. Bureau chief H.C. San Miguel was most apologetic about his aide's arrogance and mulcting (I told him there are so many complaints about the arrogance of his traffic aides) and I later learned that he gave the erring subordinate a severe tongue-lashing and a suspension. But San Miguel also gave me a copy of the Makati City ordinance of April 2003, which sets down rules and regulations on the city's own 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. "Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program," as well as the categories for exemptions there. He explained that in all of Metro Manila, only Makati and Mandaluyong do not honor the MMDA exemption.

* * *

I find this separate ruling most inconvenient as it could leave one stranded in Makati if his/her MMDA-approved vehicle doesn't jibe with the city's traffic scheme. The question is, why not make exemption rules uniform for all of Metro Manila, so as to simplify matters? Or is it another example of the arrogance of the country's wealthiest city? Besides, why don't the Makati people publicize this different policy so everyone will know? One gets to find out about it only when one is already being apprehended under the ordinance.

Do we need a two-child policy?

COMMENTARY

Ernesto M. Pernia

THE PROPOSED two-child policy underscores the need for the country to adopt a radical measure to deal with its persistent poverty—the offshoot of a laggard economy that barely keeps up with population growth and people's rising expectations. The proposal has certainly brought the population issue to the fore.

Do we really need such a policy? The answer is no—not in the form of a legislated policy, which is implied coercion. What the country needs is a clear national population policy to slow population growth towards improving—in conjunction with other socioeconomic policies—the well-being of households and society as a whole.

Mainly due to inflexible position of the Roman Catholic Church, the population problem has been kept under the rug. Not surprisingly, the Philippines, to this day, finds itself still debating on an issue that is passé for most of developing Asia.

Thus, the lack of a clear and consistent population policy starkly sets the Philippines apart from the rest of Asia. It also partly explains the country's anemic economic growth and persistent mass poverty. The country's average per capita income and labor productivity today are at the same levels as in the early 1980s. Why is this so?

Some observers have pointed poor governance and corruption and, lately, also to the external shocks caused by trade liberalization and World Trade Organization as the culprit. But clearly, the same problems also beset the other Asian economies. Why have they been able to consistently perform better than the Philippines?

The single most important challenge facing the Philippines is its high poverty incidence. Overcoming the problem has been a tall order as the country plodded through slow and erratic economic growth rates in the last two to three decades. Meanwhile, other Asian economies have seen their poverty levels decline sharply as a consequence of rapid and sustained growth, sound economic policies and a strong population policy. While these countries have been benefiting from the demographic "bonus"—sharp increases in the ratio of workers (population ages 15-64) relative young dependents (ages 0-14); the Philippines continues to bear a "demographic onus"—more young dependents as against the number of workers (and savers).

A World Bank study in 2001, based on cross-country data involving some 123 countries, shows a one-to-one relationship between economic growth and income increase for the poorest 20 percent of the population. Our own more recent research using sub-national (provincial- or district-level) data finds that the growth-poverty nexus is less than a one-to-one correspondence for individual countries like Indonesia (0.7) and the Philippines (0.55). These results provide empirical evidence confirming the common observation that economic growth is key to poverty reduction. The findings also indicate that poverty reduction can be hastened by addressing other factors that improve the distribution of the benefits of economic growth. Among the critical ones are rural infrastructure, human capital investment, better agricultural prices and agrarian reform.

In the Philippine case, whose fertility rate is among the highest in all of Asia, it may be argued that the demographic factor will have a direct effect on the poor's welfare, apart from its indirect impact on economic growth. What are the key proximate objectives and instruments of an effective population policy for the Philippines? Our research suggests mainly three.

- The first is to reduce unwanted fertility (or to meet unmet needs for contraception) through a strong national family planning program, i.e., one that offers both traditional ("natural") and modern ("artificial") methods of contraception. Family planning services, comprising information and contraceptive means, should be provided free to low-income couples who want such services. (Surveys indicate that they want the services but don't have ready access to them.)
- The second is to change the preference for large family size through an incentive structure that raises the investment per child and lowers the demand for children (e.g., through compulsory quality basic education, lower infant mortality, gender equality, and employment opportunities for women).
- The third is to reduce the population growth momentum by promoting later-age marriage and wider birth spacing, among others. Note that birth spacing is about the only measure that President Macapagal-Arroyo favors; however, without an effective family planning program, as described above, even that would be lip service.

If backed by appropriate policy reforms in the economic and social sectors, these measures would bring about best results. More specific measures to help improve the welfare of the poor would include investments in infrastructure and human capital that directly benefit the poor, and good agricultural prices and other food productivity-enhancing programs that are likely to favor poor households.

Population does matter. It matters to the question whether we choose to remain in or get out of the low-level equilibrium trap—that vicious cycle of low economic growth, high unemployment, low productivity, persistent poverty, depleting human capital and high fertility. A clear and consistent national population policy, matched by an adequately funded action program, is needed to break this vicious circle.

Ernesto M. Pernia is Professor of Economics at the University of the Philippines, Diliman. E-mail: empernia@up.edu.ph

Virtual Damocles' sword

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

WAR has always been waged on two fronts: on land and sea; our century has seen the expansion of the frontiers of war to include the air and even outer or cyberspace, not to mention, of course; the minds of men—psychological warfare.

The workhorse of the world wide web, after all, is the personal computer. Your personal computer, linked through land lines or cable lines to millions of other computers throughout the world.

Think about what a disruption of these interdependent lines of communications would result in. You've heard of what hackers can do for fun or profit. Think of what hackers in the service of armies could accomplish.

In peacetime the Internet's strategic value lies in its offering an inexpensive propaganda vehicle which can touch millions, regardless of national boundaries. A case in point is a think tank affiliated with the commander-in-chief of the US Pacific Command (Cincpac) in Hawaii, which makes net proficiency an integral part of the courses it offers. Medium- to high-level military men and officials from countries in our region, which are on friendly terms with the United States, are issued laptops and undertake intensive training in conducting research through the Net, communicating by e-mail and even using PowerPoint for their presentations as the first part of their course. The participants, by being made to become web-proficient, are necessarily guided toward what sort of information they have access to. I'd bet that most of their time is spent surfing from one US government web site to another.

There is an interesting article, titled "Information War: A New Form of People's War" and written way back in 1996 by someone named Wei Jincheng from the Liberation Army Daily of the People's Republic of China. The article has been reprinted in a book published by the US National Defense University. Six years in technological time is eons, but I'm sure this policy is being actively refined today.

Wei writes that "Thanks to modern technology, revolutionary changes in the information domain, such as the development of information carriers and the Internet, are enabling many to take part in fighting without even having to step out of the door. The rapid development of networks has turned each automated system into a potential target for invasion. The fact that information technology is increasingly relevant to people's lives determines that those who take part in information war are not all soldiers and that anybody who understands computers may become a 'fighter' on the network. Think tanks composed of nongovernmental experts may take part in decision making; rapid mobilization will not just be directed to young people; information-related industries and domains will be the first to be mobilized and enter the war; traditional modes of operations will undergo major changes; operational plans designed for information warfare will be given priority in formulation and adoption... Because other technologies are understood by people only after they are married with information technology and because information technology is becoming increasingly socialized, information warfare is not the business of the armed forces alone. Conditions exist that effectively facilitate the participation of the public in information warfare."

Or so the Chinese believe. In a nutshell, Wei asserts that even before the armies march, the first strike in a war could take place in cyberspace, thanks to the efforts of civilians.

Wei goes on to explain both the benefits and the pitfalls of "information war," asserting that this kind of war is really the supreme development of guerrilla warfare: "An information war is inexpensive, as the enemy country can receive a paralyzing blow through the Internet, and the party on the receiving end will not be able to tell whether it is a child's prank or an attack from the enemy. This characteristic of information warfare determines that each participant in the war has a higher sense of independence and greater initiative. However, if organization is inadequate, they may each fight their own battles and cannot form joint forces. Additionally, the Internet may generate a large amount of useless information that takes up limited channels and space and blocks the action of one's own side. Therefore, only by bringing relevant systems into play and combining human intelligence with artificial intelligence under effective organization and coordination can we drown our enemies in the ocean of an information offensive."

"A people's war," Wei continues, getting to the crux of his matter, "in the context of information warfare is carried out by hundreds of millions of people using open-type modern information systems. Because the traditional mode of industrial production has changed from centralization to dispersion, and commercial activities have expanded from urban areas to rural areas, the working method and mode of interaction in the original sense are increasingly information-based. Political mobilization for war must rely on information technology to become effective, for example, by generating and distributing political mobilization software via the Internet, sending patriotic e-mail messages, and setting up databases for traditional education. This way, modern technical media can be fully utilized and the openness and diffusion effect of the Internet can be expanded, to help political mobilization to exert its subtle influence."

I don't know if I ever want to find out what "political mobilization software" is!

Wei concludes by saying: "Information-based confrontations will aim at reaching tangible peace through intangible war, maintaining the peace of hardware through software confrontations, and deterring and blackmailing the enemy with dominance in the possession of information. The bloody type of war will increasingly be replaced by contention for, and confrontations of, information."

Echoes of Sun-Tzu. The successful general is the general who doesn't have to fight—or better yet, the general who has won his battle even before the armies meet on the battlefield.

Readers' requests

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

I OFTEN get e-mail and letters from the readers, which are intended for the Opinion section of the newspaper. Most of these are letters to the editor and the rest are articles for Youngblood or Highblood.

I send them right away to the Opinion staff for their consideration and review. The materials that meet the section's criteria of relevance, clarity and length stand a good chance of being published as soon as space permits.

Some letter senders do not want their names or addresses to appear in print. The usual reason given for that request is the fear that the disclosure of their identity may put their life in danger or result in the loss of their livelihood. If it is apparent from the contents of the letter that the apprehension is well-grounded, the plea for anonymity is granted.

There are letter writers who ask that I acknowledge receipt of their letters and tell them when they will be published so "they know when to buy the newspaper." While that excuse sounds plausible, something tells me that the advance information is sought so they can alert their relatives and friends to get a copy of the INQUIRER's issue for that day.

I have no problem acknowledging receipt of letters to the editor. But stating the date of publication is out of the question because I do not participate in the choice of letters published in the Letters section; that is the prerogative of the Opinion editor. In situations like this, I simply advise the letter writer to check the Letters section every day for his letter.

When the sender writes back to thank me for my advice, I keep my fingers crossed as to the realization of his wish to see his name in print in the newspaper.

Weekends only

I once received a letter where the writer specified that her letter should come out on a week day and not on a weekend. She already assumed that her letter met the standards for publication.

Why weekdays? Because she buys the INQUIRER only from Monday to Friday; she reads another newspaper on Saturdays and Sundays!

The explanation intrigued me because the INQUIRER's circulation is highest during weekends and holidays when the readers have the luxury of time to leisurely go through the contents of the newspaper. That also explains why the newspaper has more pages during those days.

I respect the reader's right to choose what newspaper she wants to read. If she wants diversity in her reading fare, that's her privilege. Out of respect, I did not ask the reader why she abstains from reading the INQUIRER on weekends. Whatever may be the reason, it's something that the editorial staff should discuss. Is the competition doing something right that makes some readers like to read them on Saturdays and Sundays?

A turn-off for me are letters or articles that attempt to "coerce" the newspaper into publishing them, by saying that doing so would "show that the INQUIRER is not biased against any person or group," or that it lives up to its slogan of "balanced news and fearless views." It's reverse psychology of a sort whose motives are too obvious to be overlooked.

Once I see this side note in the materials, the alarm bells in my brain start ringing. Why did the writer have to resort to this approach? Can the letter or article not stand on its own merits that the INQUIRER has to be "intimidated" into publishing it? Is there a hidden agenda behind the pressure to have the materials published?

As in other requests for publication in the Opinion section, it's the section editor who has the last say on matters of this nature. So far, I think the strategy has not worked.

Non-publication

A request from the readers that the newspaper is unable to satisfy is to acknowledge receipt of their letters or articles and return them if they do not meet the criteria for publication.

Considering the volume of letters and e-mail that the editorial staff receives daily (which averages from 80 to 100) and lack of manpower, there is no way the newspaper can write the senders individually to tell them that it received their submissions.

For the same reasons, the INQUIRER cannot return by mail or other means the letters that do not find print in the Letters section, much less explain why they did not deserve publication.

I can imagine the frustration of letter senders who check the newspaper every day and not see the product of their genius come out in print. But that's how the cookie crumbles in the INQUIRER, and in other newspapers, for that matter.

Word of advice to those who find themselves in that waiting game: if their materials are not published within two weeks from the date they were received by the newspaper, chances are they failed to meet the criteria for publication.

This should be the cue for the writer to either try his luck with other newspapers or review his manuscript to find the reason for its failure to pass muster with the INQUIRER. Who was it who said that if at first you don't succeed, try and try again?

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City." Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Apathetic trapos

"In terms of legislating, it's still in its very, very initial stages and it has difficulty legislating its advocacies. You don't get sympathy from traditional politicians."

—Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales on party-list members in Congress

Miracle of sharing

"My wife and I cried when Juriel was born. It didn't seem like the tears would stop. An orthopedic specialist practically ruled out hope for the boy—including the possibility of using crutches, since he had but one arm. Now we can send him to a day-care center. Just like any other boy."

—Joel Amora, whose son, born without legs and only one arm, got prosthetic limbs through the help of a New Zealand missionary and kind-hearted Australians

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Worst two weeks for press freedom

IN LESS than two weeks, four Filipino journalists were murdered, making the period between July 31 and Aug. 12 quite possibly the worst two weeks for press freedom in the Philippines. Since last year, 13 of our colleagues have been killed. Since 1986, 55 of us have been assassinated. But not one suspect has been convicted of any of these murders.

Why?

We've been asking the authorities that question and they cannot give us a straight answer. They say they have solved 14 cases, but the Philippine National Police's definition of "solved" is different from that of the rest of the world. PNP considers a case "solved" when the suspect has been identified and after the case has been turned over to the Department of Justice for prosecution —never mind if the case is still pending or if the suspect is still at large. PNP's definition is not only misleading—it mocks the justice system and the sufferings of the families and friends of our fallen colleagues.

The failure of the authorities to solve the killings over the years is astounding. Not even President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive to the PNP chief Hermogenes Ebdane to resolve these murders has produced any positive results. Thus, the climate of impunity in the killing of journalists persists.

Today, Aug. 16, media groups in Manila and the nearby provinces—among them the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, Press Photographers of the Philippines, Philippine Center for Photojournalism, College Editors Guild of the Philippines, Union of Journalists of the Philippines-UP, Batangas Newswriters Association—will hold a picket-rally in front of the PNP headquarters in Camp Crame, along Edsa, Quezon City. Assembly time is 9 a.m., at the Soliven Tower, Edsa corner Annapolis St., Greenhills, near the MRT Santolan station.

NUJP chapters and other media groups across the country will also hold their own protest actions the same day.

We would like to invite you to join us in expressing our displeasure with the failure of the police and the judiciary to solve these killings.

Please wear black, whether you will attend the picket or not. This is our small way of mourning the deaths of our colleagues and in expressing outrage over the killings.

Thank you for standing by us in our struggle for press freedom.

—INDAY ESPINA-VARONA, chair,
CARLOS H. CONDE, secretary general,
National Union of Journalists
of the Philippines,
www.nujp.org

'Luxury' taxes, more ideas to up revenues

IN TRYING to solve the budgetary deficit, the government should refrain from imposing additional taxes on essential and basic needs and services, such as gasoline and telecommunications. Gasoline, diesel and other oil products are used in transportation, which is indispensable in economic undertakings. Telecommunications, which include text messaging, have as much a vital role in modern trade and commerce, not to mention in family relations and social interactions.

If new taxes are to be imposed, this should be done on products that encourage vices, such as cigarettes and liquor, as well as on imported luxury items, such as expensive cars (e.g, SUVs) that consume excessive fuel, signature clothes, watches, jewelry and other non-essential items that only drain our foreign exchange resources, and imported chocolates and fruits. Imposing higher taxes on luxury imports will not only raise revenues but also conserve our forex reserves for more important and basic items. Or, perhaps, the government would want to ban luxury imports temporarily until our balance of payments improves and the pressure on our foreign debt eases up.

So much can be done without necessarily increasing the burden of taxation.

—ALMA CHUA,
Gandara, Western Samar

Strange ways of Malacañang

THIS is in reaction to the reports that Malacañang has accepted the resignation of Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo.

Perhaps the time is already past to expect that the powers-that-be, who decide on matters like who the next commissioner of customs will be, will change their minds. Too late or too futile though our efforts may be, we must speak our piece for the record and say that the Bureau of Customs (and the nation) needs a man such as Commissioner Bernardo at his post, especially in these critical times.

The members of the Samahan ng mga Personero sa Aduana (SPA), representing the bulk of customs brokers with daily dealings at the BOC, have seen several customs commissioners come and go and we know whereof we speak when we say that Commissioner Bernardo is one of the best we have been fortunate to work with. He has engineered and streamlined a more sensible order into our functions as representatives of customs brokers. He has put into better shape the operations and processes of the BOC at the Port Area in Manila as well as in the different ports and districts all over the country. Smuggling and graft are increasingly and steadily brought to heel by Bernardo's all encompassing plans to make the BOC a clean and honorable service in the huge task of nation-building. As a result, despite various obstacles that still hinder its objectives, customs revenue collections have significantly grown.

Revenue targets will be surpassed, the bane of smuggling will finally meet its match and the BOC will be the proud and dependable service it is expected to be if the plans and programs and the people who made them are given the time and the backing they need to make them work.

This is why we find it outrageous that Bernardo's work will now be cut short just when they have the best chance of coming true, when they are most needed. Government's ways are indeed very strange. Bernardo will no doubt do well wherever they place him. But the BOC needs him today.

—RENE HONDOLERO,
president
Samahan ng mga Personero
sa Aduana (SPA)

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Tax cheat vs corrupt public official: who is more evil?

I CAN only partly agree Mr. Cholo Reyes ("Tax cheats are worse than murderers," PDI, 8/10/04). What about the corrupt government officials siphoning off already scarce public funds into their bottomless pockets? What about those government employees who report to work every day but only work two to three hours a day, most of the time doing something unrelated to their work, if they are not just killing time? And they still have the face to stage strikes for higher pay and benefits? These people have no shame!

Who would be interested in paying taxes if these would just be wasted by our legislators in the form of pork barrels; if the cost of pork barrel projects is overpriced by up to four to five times their original price? Do you think that elected government officials run for public office because they really want to serve the people? My God! The salaries they get for a whole term are much, much less than what they spend to get themselves elected! Still, when an official ends his/her term or retires from politics,.they are tens of millions of pesos richer than before their election.

I've talked to several businessmen and most, if not all, are willing to pay their taxes religiously only if they see that their environment is being attended to and getting better, only if they don't hear that legislators are pocketing big, big slices of their pork barrel, only if the government is not wasting public funds by hiring more employees than it needs to efficiently and effectively serve the people.

Our public officials and employees should learn to be more respectful to the people who pay their salaries through taxes. Now tell me, who is more evil?

—STANLEY CHAN,
sc888ph@yahoo.com

Sa tamang pagpaplano ng pamilya
KASANGGA MO ANG LANGIT!
Kung family planning ang pag-uusapan, dito ka na sa programang hulog ng langit. Ang TRUST Family Program ay may dalawang oral contraceptives that you can trust and make you feel like a lady at injectable na protektado ang inyong pagpaplano ng pamilya ng 90-araw. Kakampi mo ang Langit sa TRUST Family Program, ang reliable, affordable at convenient na family planning methods.
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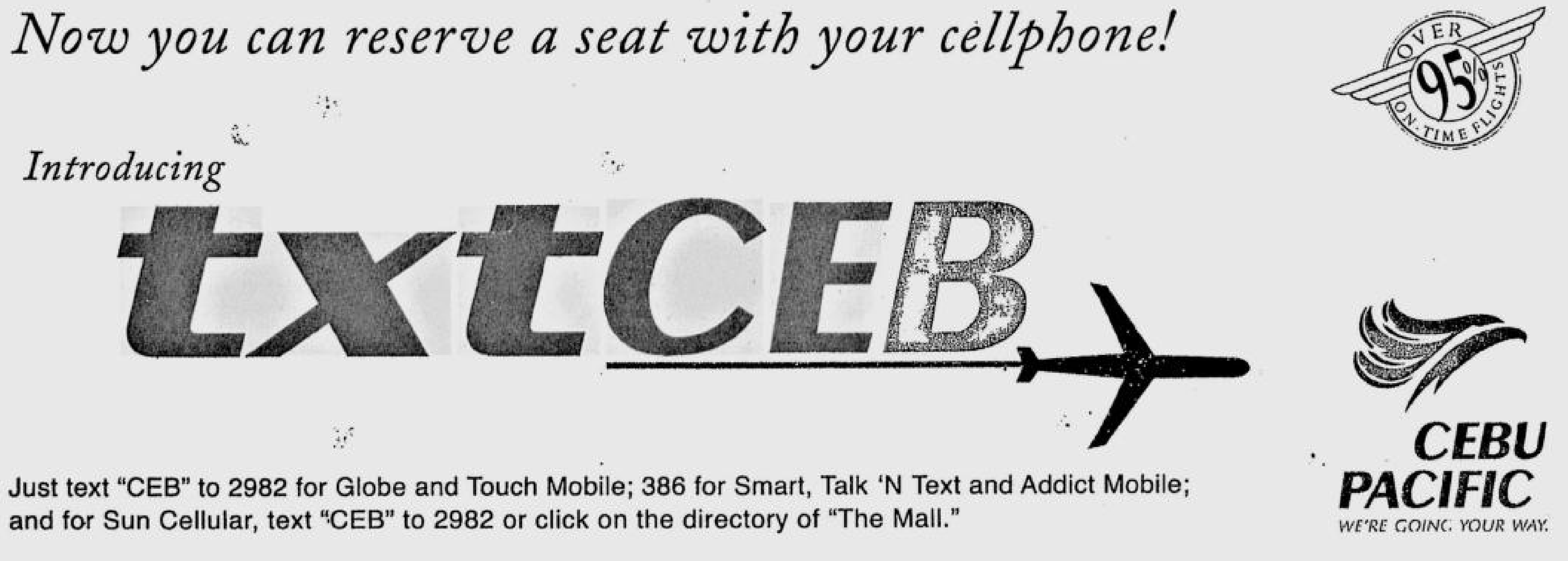
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Pampanga execs to probe hike in toll fees in North

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Officials in Pampanga said they would investigate the plan of the Lopez Group-led Manila North Tollways Corp. (MNTC) to increase toll fees along the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX) by 600 to 700 percent at the end of the year.

Rep. Ana York Bondoc and Pampanga board member Nestor Tolentino said they would find ways to prevent the MNTC from imposing "exorbitant" toll rates that would adversely affect local businesses and residents.

"The planned increase is too much. Everybody will be affected, even passengers of buses using the expressway," Bondoc said.

She said she would discuss the issue with the 24-member Central Luzon congressional bloc in their meeting today. The bloc, she said, now included party-list representatives from the region.

"I will ask the Central Luzon bloc to initiate an investigation of the MNTC's planned toll fee increase ... and find out why the MNTC wants to impose toll fees that people cannot afford to pay," she said.

Tolentino said he and his colleagues at the provincial board would conduct a separate investigation of the issue. He said residents had been urging their officials to do something about the MNTC plan.

"Even big businesses are complaining. Their delivery trucks will have to pay much higher toll fees," he said.

Another Pampanga lawmaker, Rep. Reynaldo Aquino, and San Fernando Mayor Oscar Rodriguez are also opposing the toll rate increase.

They said the planned P195 toll fee for cars and small vehicles for a distance of only about 80 km from Balintawak, Quezon City, to Mabalacat town in Pampanga was "too high."

Rodriguez said the increase would not be compatible with the national government's Central Luzon Global Gateway program, which aims to integrate the seaport of Subic, the Clark airport and the various economic zones in the region.

The program aims to develop a world-class economic corridor comprising of industrial, commercial, logistics, ecological and cultural tourism activities.

"I consider the raising of the toll fee unjust. It is true that [a] huge amount of money was used in rehabilitating the NLEX. But the MNTC should find ways to balance the situation without putting much burden on the public," Rodriguez said.

Aquino said the public also deserved to be informed about the MNTC plan to increase its toll rates by about seven times.

Earlier, Jose de Jesus, MNTC president, said that increasing the toll fees was needed for the recovery of his firm's investment.

He said the "smooth and comfortable ride" to be provided by the highway and its "state-of-the art facilities" would justify the higher toll rates.

The MNTC is scheduled to take over the expressway's management and operations by December or the first quarter of next year.

Earlier, Transportation Undersecretary Arturo Valdez told reporters that the government could not do anything to stop the increase in toll rates.

Valdez said the MNTC had entered into a "special toll-operating agreement" with the Toll Regulatory Board, compelling the agency to guarantee the MNTC's right to increase the toll fees it would collect from motorists using the NLEX.

He also said the MNTC had used its special toll-operating agreement as a guarantee in securing loans to fund the expansion and rehabilitation of the expressway.

The MNTC is a joint venture company formed by First Philippines Infrastructure Development Corp., the Philippine National Construction Corp., and the EGIS Group (Transroute).

The firm has been rehabilitating and expanding the 83.7-km expressway at a cost of P371 million. The project includes the construction and rehabilitation of 14 interchanges, 24 bridges and 31 overpasses from Balintawak to the Sta. Ines exit in Mabalacat, and the operation of the 8.8-km expressway in Subic.

The Lopez Group owns majority of MNTC, while PNCC, which has been operating the expressway since the 1980s, has a minority stake in the company. *Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

C. Mindanao workers get ₱20 daily wage hike; farm workers get ₱10

COTABATO CITY—The Regional Wages and Productivity Board granted a P20 daily wage increase to workers in the non-agriculture sector and P10 for agriculture workers.

Cyril Ticao, labor director for Central Mindanao and board chairperson, said the new wage order would take effect only in January next year.

Ticao said the P20 additional pay would be given to non-agriculture workers receiving a daily rate of P300 and below. The prevailing minimum wage in the region is P170 per day, plus P10 cost of living allowance (Cola) for non-agriculture workers.

With the new wage order, non-agriculture workers would have a take-home pay of P200.

Joel Gonzales, RTWPB board secretary, explained that effective Sept. 1, the P10 provisional emergency relief allowance (Pera) would be integrated into the P170 basic minimum wage.

Ticao said the prescribed wage rates would apply to workers and employees in the private sector, regardless of position, designation or status of employment and irrespective of the methods by which their wages are paid.

Not covered by the P20 daily wage increase and Cola are household or domestic helpers, persons employed in the personal service, like family drivers, and workers of certified Barangay Micro-Business Enterprises.

Gonzales explained that the board came up with the new order following consultations with labor and management sectors in the cities of Cotabato, Kidapawan, Koronadal and General Santos.

Oscar Tan Abing, owner of a chain of grocery stores in Cotabato City, said the business community and other employers were expected to comply with the new wage law.

However, he said, some traders, especially those suffering from the brunt of increases in oil prices, transport and service costs, might find it hard to comply with the law.

In Cagayan de Oro City, the Regional Tripartite Wages and Productivity Board also approved separate sets of wage increase for workers in Northern Mindanao.

For those in fast growing areas, workers would get P10 per day, while those in other areas would receive P3. Both adjustments took effect on Thursday.

The RTWPB said it considered the current inflation rate, increase in fares and other economic indicators in setting the increases.

It also ordered the integration of the P12 Cola it had earlier granted into the new wage order. *Edwin Fernandez and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Power rates hiked in Capiz

ROXAS CITY—Starting Sept. 1, power rates in Capiz will increase by 39 centavos per kilowatt-hour when the Capiz Electric Cooperative (Capelco) starts implementing the unbundling of its rates.

Edgar Diaz, Capelco general manager, said the unbundling was mandated under Republic Act 9136, also known as Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), which was approved on June 8, 2001 by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He said the Energy Regulatory Commission has authorized the implementation of the unbundled rates starting next month in all electric cooperatives and distribution utilities in the country, such as the Transmission Company and Generation Co. (formerly the National Power Corp.).

Under the unbundling of rates, charges will be broken down into different components, such as generation, transmission, distribution, supply, franchise tax and metering fees.

The Epira also authorizes the implementation of the universal rate, which is collected to pay for the electrification of far-flung areas, watershed rehabilitation under an "environmental fund," and costs incurred by the government, the Transco and other distribution companies as a result of the restructuring of the power industry.

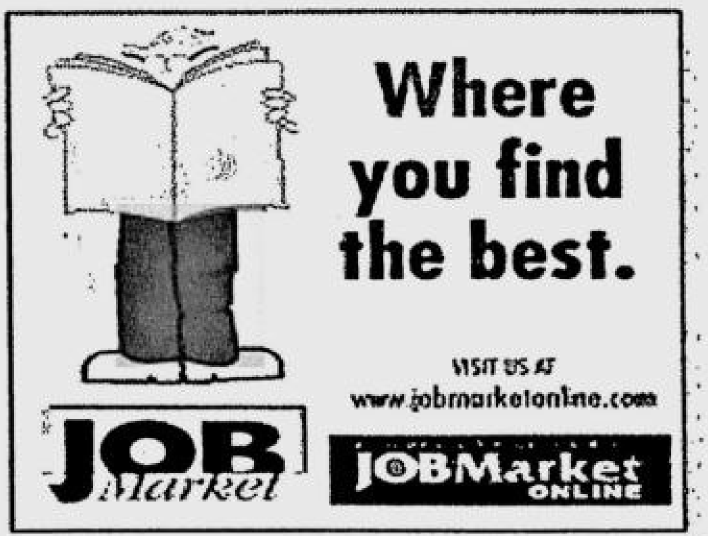
Diaz told reporters in a press conference here Friday that the unbundling of rates would determine the "true cost" of the power services.

In the case of Capelco, the average increase would be 36 percent, or 39.1 centavos. The present rate is P5.240 per kWh.

When the unbundling of rate is implemented next month, the rate will rise to P5.6310.

Capelco has 95,827 consumers and served 452 of the 473 barangays of Capiz.

Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau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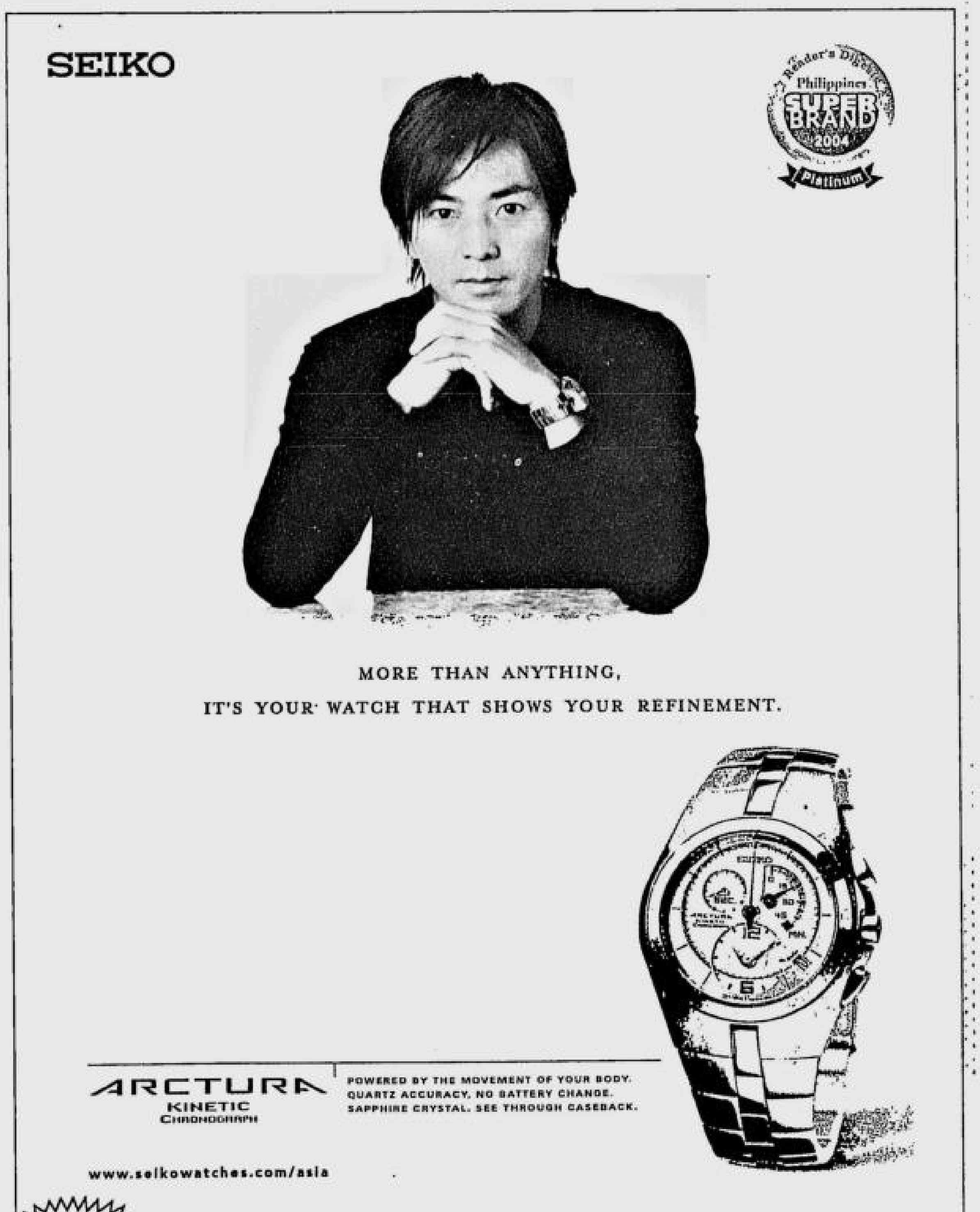
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Virus destroys abaca plantations in Negros

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Millions of pesos worth of abaca in Negros Oriental have been damaged due to abaca mosaic, a viral infection caused by aphids.

The infection destroys the fiber and makes the plants yellowish.

Nena Locsin, provincial officer of the Fiber Development Authority (Fida) in Negros Oriental, told the INQUIRER that 380 hectares of abaca plantations in the towns of Valencia and Sibulan had so far been infected with abaca mosaic.

Each hectare earns between P20,000 and P60,000 yearly, depending on the quality of the plant, she said.

At least 2,000 hectares of land in the towns of Valencia, Sibulan, Pamplona, San Jose, Amlan, Ayungon, Jimalalud, Bindoy, Dauin and Guihulngan, and in Bais City have been planted with abaca, with around 1,600 families depending on the industry as main source of income.

One hectare can produce 1,000 kilograms of abaca in a year.

Locsin said the destruction of abaca plants was particularly devastating to Valencia since the town has been exporting around 180 tons of "excellent grade" of abaca fiber yearly.

The abaca fiber in Valencia can command P50,000 to P60,000 per ton, she said.

The abaca in Sibulan produces the so-called loose fiber or pulp, which is used as the main ingredient of paper. Its price ranges from P20,000 to P30,000 per ton. Aside from fiber and pulp, the by-products of abaca such as *sinamay* cloth, hats and decorations, are exported to the United States, Japan, France and Italy.

Locsin said the economic potential of the industry is certainly very bright that is why there was an imperative need to immediately address the concern.

She said the Fida, together with the provincial government, would immediately start the campaign to eradicate abaca mosaic since the disease spreads rapidly.

Locsin said infected plants would have to be totally destroyed by "rouging," or by administering chemicals to the roots. "We cannot uproot one by one the affected plants because of their number. That is why we have to do the rouging," she said.

Diseases stalk malnourished kids in GenSan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The City Nutrition Council said diseases were stalking at least 3,000 malnourished children in 10 villages here.

Based on a survey and monitoring report conducted by the council, the children were suffering from severe or moderate malnutrition.

The CNC said parents cited lack of food as the main cause of malnutrition.

However, the CNC team came up with its own observation that the reasons for the onset of malnutrition in the villages included the parents' lack of nutrition awareness, especially on breastfeeding.

Dr. Rose Acharon, council action officer, advised mothers to breastfeed their babies for complete nutrition and for a stronger immune system.

Acharon said breastfeeding could start right after a child is delivered. But parents, especially those who can afford it, she said, feed infants food supplements when the babies reach six months.

Acharon said breastfeeding and a proper diet would help children overcome malnutrition.

Rep. Darlene Antonino Custodio (South Cotabato, 1st District) said parents could hardly provide children's needs so "it's better if a family would limit the number of their children to just two."

But Custodio said the proposed two-child policy could not stop the country's rapid population growth.

She said what the government should do is educate the people. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

5 dead in mishap

STA. ROSA, Laguna—Five persons died and 19 others were wounded when the service vehicle of Masuda Philippines hit a big acacia tree at the roadside in Barangay Don Jose here over the weekend.

Town police chief Supt. Eduardo Sanque identified the fatalities as Jun Marti Erice, Jaypee Ichipari, Carlos Malapitan, Ericson Montanes and a certain Perez.

He said 19 others, including the driver, Jessmon Tagan, suffered cuts and abrasions and were brought to nearby hospitals.

All the victims were contractual employees of Masuda, which produces car spare parts for Honda-Kiusakay group of companies, police said.

Sanque said the vehicle was traversing the national road at around 6:30 p.m. to bring the workers home after a day's work from the company's main facility inside the Laguna Technopark in Biñan town when the accident happened.

While approaching the traffic light at a junction, Sanque said, Tagan lost control of the wheel, sending the vehicle straight into the huge tree.

Police said Malapitan, who was sitting in the front seat, died on the spot. The four others died on their way to the Perpetual Medical Hospital.

"The impact was just enormous. The vehicle was a total wreck. Anyone who saw the van could not believe that the driver survived the accident," Sanque said.

Police said they had yet to establish the reason why Tagan lost control of the vehicle. Investigators said some witnesses saw the "van racing against another shuttle bus." *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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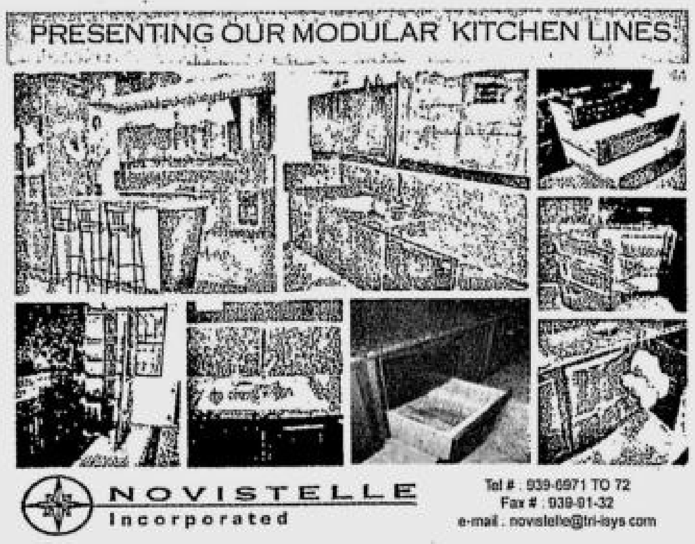
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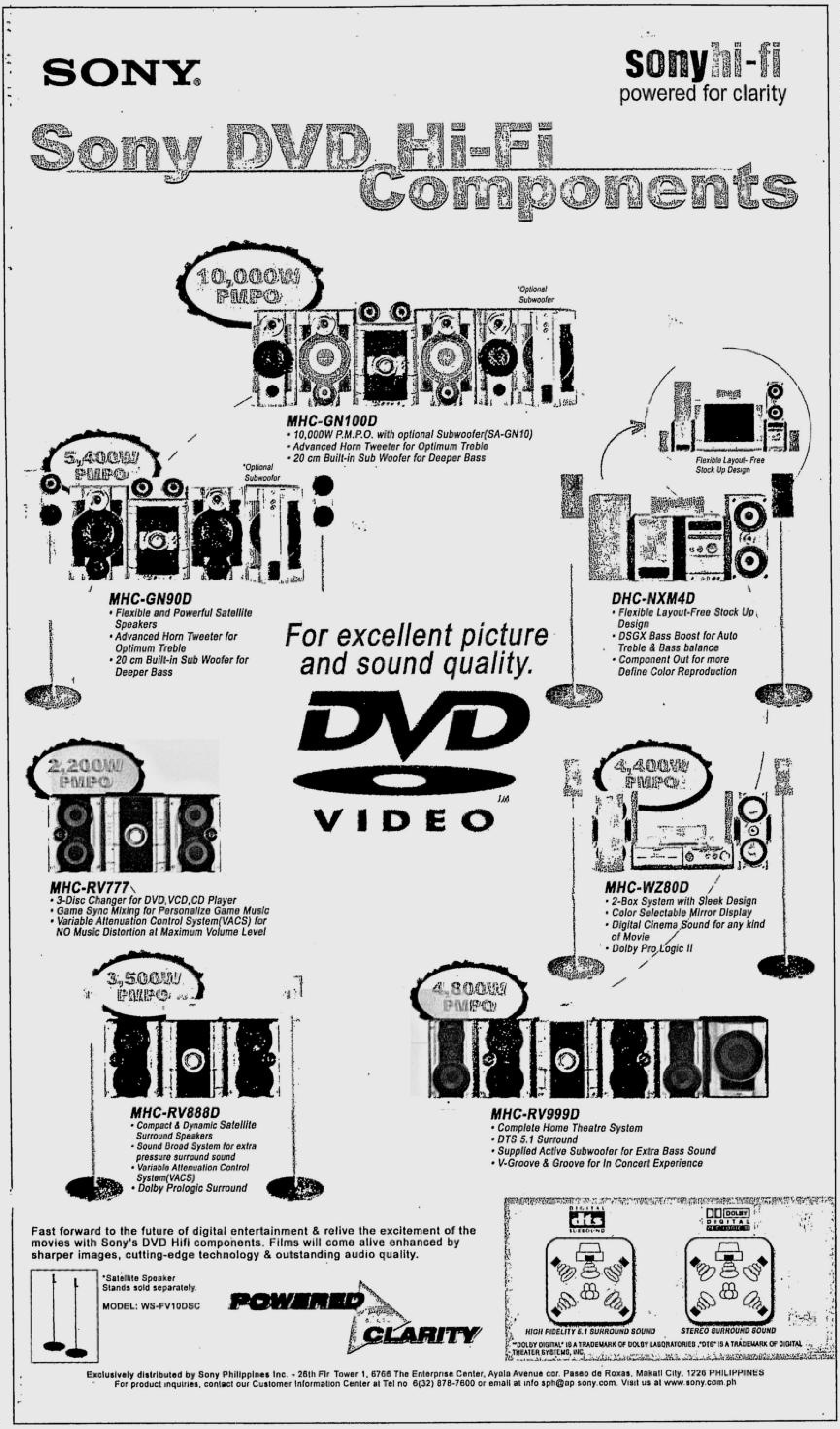
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Lawmakers support inquiry into media killings

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

DAVAO journalists put white ribbons on their left shoulders during an indignation rally against the killing of journalists.

LUCENA CITY—At least three Quezon lawmakers have declared support for a congressional inquiry into the failure of the Philippine National Police and the judiciary to solve a single case of the 55 journalists slain since 1986.

"The rising incidence of media killings is really alarming. With 55 unsolved incidents of media assassinations since 1986, the government should not simply ignore and sweep the matter under the rag. The police have a lot to explain," said Rep. Rafael Nantes (first district) in a phone interview.

Rep. Danilo Suarez (third district) said he would support any petition from media groups that wanted Congress to investigate the murders.

Rep. Proceso Alcala (second district) said he would also support the investigation.

City Councilor Nick Pedro, who is also a media practitioner, dared the Manila-based media organizations "to rise up and shake the leadership of the national government" to wake them up on the dangerous plight of provincial media workers.

"The war zones are in the provinces where the local correspondents are slowly being wiped out by the powers that be, whether in the government or from the underground crime syndicates. Those Manila-based media bigwigs should act before it's too late for their local counterparts," Pedro said in his radio program yesterday morning.

"The provincial media practitioners would soon become an endangered human species," he added.

In a statement, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) chapter in the province also criticized a plan by military officials in Mindanao to deploy soldiers as journalists.

"After Mindanao, where next? That proposal was stupid and would not serve any to protect media practitioners," the group said.

"It would only serve the scheming designs of the Armed Forces in their counter-insurgency operations at the expense of the media."

Johnny Glorioso, NUJP-Quezon chair, said the organization would immediately convene members of the fractious local media to map out plans and security measures on how to address the spate of media killings.

"Two weeks ago, the killing happened in Batangas, the other day, it was in Laguna. What's next, Quezon?" he said before a group of provincial reporters yesterday morning.

"We should all remember that the killing of Polly Pobeda has remained unsolved and now here comes a new trend making media workers shooting targets," he added.

Pobeda, a commentator of radio dwTI, was gunned down on May 17 last year while aboard his motorcycle on his way to the radio station. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Kin mourn death of Veritas reporter

VICTORIA, Laguna—Relatives of the slain Radio Veritas correspondent Fernando Consignado, 50, appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo and law enforcers to bring the culprits to justice and give peace to their loved one.

Agripina Consignado-Labing, 54, sister of the victim, told the INQUIRER that the nine Consignado siblings had entrusted on their journalist brother the care of their land.

She said her brother was a man of peace. "I do not know of any report of my brother, whose stories were generally Church-related and about development, that could hurt and enrage anybody."

"What we knew was that our family was involved in a court battle over land disputes which my brother Fernando wanted to settle fairly," Labing said.

Fernando's sister said her slain brother's wake had to be made in Victoria town for reasons involving security and because all their siblings agreed that their brother be buried beside their late father's grave at the Garden of Angels cemetery.

Liza Consignado-Varela, 30, daughter of Fernando, said she could not believe her father's senseless death and appealed to government authorities to help them find speedy justice.

Varela said she last saw her father in March. Her elder sister, Alma, 32, had just talked to him on Sunday before he died. He had requested for her help because his mobile phone was malfunctioning.

"Never did we realize that my father's life was in danger. And we did not see any sign that my father would die a violent death," Varela said.

Labing said she had pity for her brother because his whole life seemed to be very sad. His first marriage to Edelfina Alcoba ended when their two daughters, Alma and Liza, were on 3 and 2 years old.

Fernando had another partner, Larsey Arvelo, and they had a daughter, Donna, who is now 21 and a professional. The relationship did not also last.

Another partner, Aireen Plantilla, gave birth to Fernando's son, Joven, who is now in Grade 4.

Marcelino Consignado, 49, younger brother of the victim, expressed sadness that Fernando, whom he knew to be peace loving and preoccupied with serving the public in media, died a painful death.

"I ask [the] authorities to help us seek justice for [our] slain brother. Although I am not perfectly sure that my brother did not anger people in his work as a reporter, I don't think he deserved to die the way he did," Marcelino said.

Labing said Fernando served Veritas for about 10 years as a correspondent and was a recipient of a media award from the Philippine National Police for helping a 5-year-old child in Nagcarlan town, who was a victim of rape. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Logging equipment, timber seized in Maguindanao watershed

COTABATO CITY—Environmentalists seized high quality timber products and logging equipment inside a critical watershed in Maguindanao on Thursday, officials said.

Kahal Kedtag, community environment officer of Maguindanao I-A, said forest guards of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources joined civilians in apprehending some 2,300 board feet of cut lumber and two heavy-duty chainsaws.

The seizure happened just as the multisectoral group, Save Dimapatoy Watershed Area (Sadiwa), hosted a water conservation summit on Aug. 12.

Kedtag said civilian-backed operations against illegal logging in Maguindanao became "part of a continuing [act of] cooperation among stakeholders of the Dimapatoy Watershed, which traverses the towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, North Upi and South Upi, and this city, in efforts to curb "rampant cutting of trees on commercial scale."

The Army's Task Force Tugis, which is based in Datu Odin Sinsuat, also helped residents and government forest guards in the anti-illegal logging operations in the Dimapatoy Watershed that led to the apprehension of the products and equipment.

The summit gathered private groups, residents, government representatives, journalists, and law enforcers into roundtable discussions on fighting imminent water shortage and protection of trees at the 43,000-hectare watershed.

Residents and authorities also worked together in resettling watershed intruders to prevent what they said was the emergence of "water terrorism" in the area.

Lawyer Delfin Hilario, head of the Metro Cotabato Water District, said Sadiwa had earlier negotiated for the resettlement of around 200 families from the critical watershed, because human dwellings in the area could eventually poison the city's water supply.

As this developed, the provincial government of North Cotabato signed a memorandum of agreement with Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, tasking the military with apprehending some 200 chainsaws and dismantling 50 mini-sawmills around the wood-rich Lake Baranibod between Alamada in North Cotabato and Buldon in Maguindanao, 85 km northeast of this city.

Col. Alfredo Cayton, commander of the Army's 601st Army Brigade based in Sarangani, said DENR executive director for Central Mindanao Jim Sampulna also tasked them with implementing laws against illegal logging.

Cayton said the campaign would focus on Maasim, Kiamba and Maitum in Sarangani, including Palimbang town in Sultan Kudarat, areas where illegal logging activities are rampant, he said.

"Now, we can go all-out against illegal loggers with the deputization order coming from the DENR. This is what we've been waiting for," Cayton said.

The military official said the order strengthened their resolve to curb illegal logging in the hinterlands of Sarangani and Sultan Kudarat. *Nash Maulana and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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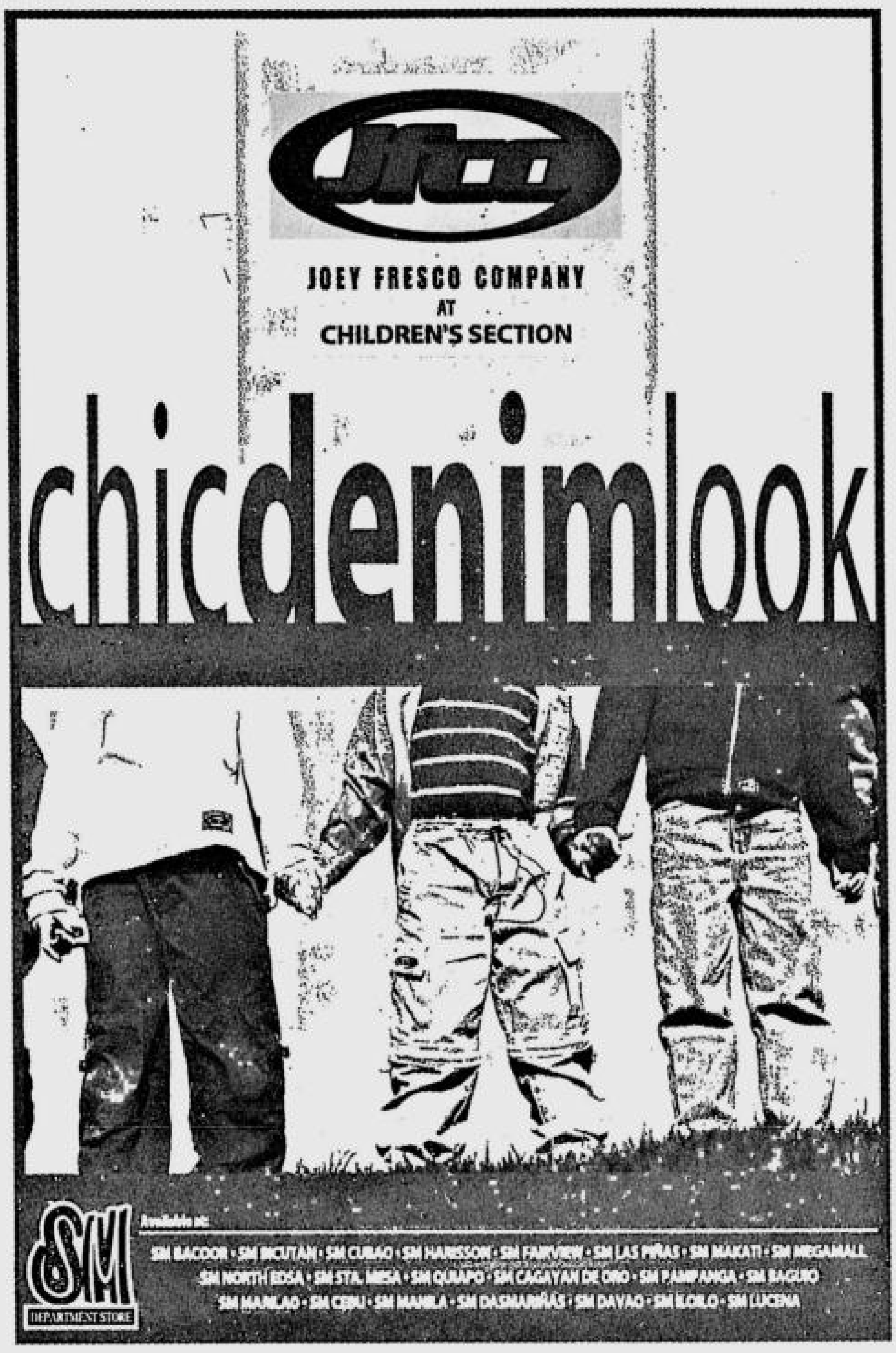

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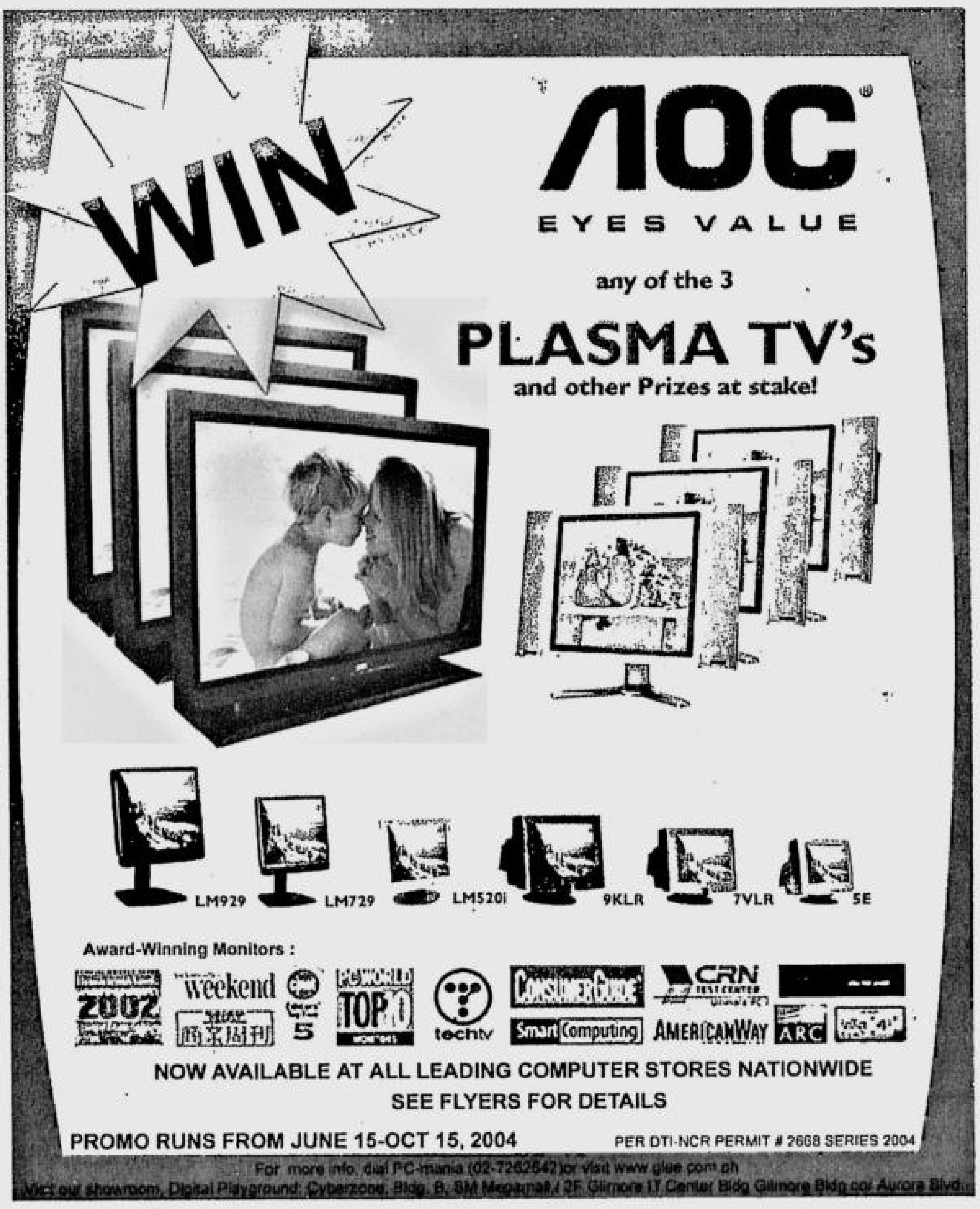

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Bible, shaving kit for NPA captives

From page A1

had sent her a text message, telling her that his Army unit would have an operation in Tinambac town in Camarines Sur.

"He even asked me to send him a (mobile phone) load so he could call me," she recalled. "But I never heard from him again until more than a week later. He phoned me and asked me to seek help."

From the preparations of their anxious families, the welcome they will get won't quite rival that which De la Cruz got in his hometown in Pampanga last month when he returned after being saved by the government from a beheading by Islamic militants in Iraq.

Church bells pealed, bands struck up welcome music, and De la Cruz's village of Buenavista erupted into dancing when he came home.

"Only a typhoon or an eruption by Mt. Mayon can derail the release," Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. (LP, Camarines Sur), the chief broker in the negotiations with the NPA, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

'Not as lavish as Olympics'

Andaya said that he received on Friday two letters from Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Luis Jalandoni, chief peace negotiator of the communist-led National Democratic Front, regarding the suspension of offensive military operations by the two sides.

"It (ceasefire) took effect 12:01 this morning (yesterday)," Andaya said. "Overall, the duration is 10 days. The ceasefire will be in effect seven days after the release, and the agreement is for Fidelino and Nemeño to be released within 72 hours after the current ceasefire took effect."

Asked to confirm the location of the release site, he said: "Issues like venue are within the control and prerogative of the NDF as the party in custody of the two."

"What I can only say is that it (release) will not be as lavish an event as the opening of the Olympics," Andaya said.

A daughter's birthday

Unhappily for Fidelino and his family and assuming the agreed timetable is followed, he may not be around when his first-born, Alea Nicole, celebrates her second birthday at their home in Fort Bonifacio. The child's birthday is today.

The government had been working to have Fidelino and Nemeño released in time for the birthday.

Leah has prepared a shaving kit for her husband, who has grown a full beard since he and Nemeño were captured by the NPA Romulo Jallores Command.

Along with the shaver will be a newly pressed military uniform Fidelino will wear when he and Nemeño are presented to President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang.

"Of course, I want him to look handsome again so I'll give him a nice shave and a clean uniform," Leah said in Filipino.

A Bible for the soldier

Leah is also shopping for the best "*bangus*" (milkfish) she can grill with onions and tomatoes, Fidelino's favorite.

In Nemeño's case, his brother Mariano has bought a Bible for the "deeply Catholic" soldier.

"I couldn't think of a better gift than a Bible," the brother told the INQUIRER. "It's our family's way of thanking the good Lord for ensuring the safe release of my brother."

Fried chicken from a popular fast-food chain where Nemeño had worked in Cotabato City would cap a nice welcome, the brother said.

Mariano said he would prefer that his brother's sweetheart, Irene, join the simple celebration. But he said he had lost touch with her.

Nemeño was supposed to marry Irene in late March—except that he was captured about a month before the wedding bells were to ring.

Relief came to Fidelino's and Nemeño's families only a few days ago when Ms Arroyo on Friday night ordered the suspension of police and military operations in Bicol, where the two officers are believed being held.

Sleepless nights

The suspension was the condition that the NPA and the NDF had set to allow for the safe turnover of the captives to their families and to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Before Ms Arroyo's announcement, there was only gloom in the Fidelino household and in Nemeño's home in a mountainous town in Agusan del Sur.

Since her husband's capture, Leah had been gripped by fear that the communist rebels might harm him.

"I often woke up in the middle of sleep and just cried," she said. "I was afraid that he would no longer come back."

Mariano was very cautious about giving details of his brother's capture. Their parents, both farmers in Agusan, are weak and sickly and they might not be able to handle the bad news, he said. Still, they had to know.

Once worked at Jollibee

"Our mother is always crying," he said. In her mind, her son didn't deserve the misfortune.

The 24-year-old Nemeño, the eleventh in a brood of 12, joined the Armed Forces more than two years ago purely for financial reasons.

His family was too poor to support his education—he stopped as a junior medical technology student and worked as a crew member at Jollibee in Cotabato. But his income was barely enough to support even himself, so he joined the military.

Through all their financial difficulties, Mariano said his family, especially Nemeño, would get by through prayers. And these, he is sure, would bring his brother and Fidelino back.

Andaya said the ceasefire would cover Albay and Camarines Sur, where the release was expected to be made.

He said the two soldiers would be received by himself, government chief peace negotiator Silvestre Bello III, and an ICRC representative.

Peace talks between the government and NDF were supposed to restart late this month.

Peace talks

The NDF, however, put off the scheduled talks after the US government again classified the Philippine communist rebels as terrorists.

"The release of the two captives can be a good beginning for both sides to consider resuming the peace negotiations," Andaya said.

The lawmaker is confident that there will not be any last-minute hitches which could derail the release of the two soldiers.

"If Angelo de la Cruz was yanked out of a hole in a faraway land, why can't we do the same for two guys who are right in our own backyard?" Andaya said.

"If the government pulled out its troops from Iraq, I know that it will pull back its troops from its own territory temporarily."

Joma skeptical

Despite the impending release of the two "prisoners of war," communist leader Jose Maria Sison still could not help but express skepticism that the Arroyo administration would return the gesture by freeing political prisoners.

"Don't be too sure about the release of political prisoners who have been detained on false charges of common crimes and in violation of the Hernandez political offense doctrine. The GRP is notorious for promising such releases and reneging on the promise," Sison said in response to an e-mailed question on whether or not the release of political prisoners would help the peace negotiations.

The NDF is seeking the release of several political prisoners, including the "Mamburao 6" and the alleged killers of US Army Col. James Rowe.

Sison said that, in addition to freeing political prisoners, the Arroyo administration should make a public statement that, in accordance with The Hague Joint Declaration, acts of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the NPA and himself, "are beyond the jurisdiction of the US government."

In an earlier interview, Sison stressed that the rebel movement "is not willing to negotiate under duress"—referring to the "terrorist" tag imposed by Washington on the CPP-NPA and himself. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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COMPOSER Carmen "Pinky" Valdes (left) with singer Joey Albert. JOAN BONDOC

Former 'Singing Nun' offers songs of hope

From page A1

dioPowerhouse and Fantasy studios in San Francisco.

Using music to get her message across comes naturally to this *mestiza*, whose mother was of Spanish-English blood and whose father, an airline executive, was Kapampangan.

Valdes grew up in a household in Old Sta. Mesa, where the children were prodded to play musical instruments. She was playing the piano at age six, and switched to the guitar at 12. At 13, she wrote her first composition.

Singing nun

An "Assumptionista" since grade school, Valdes entered the convent in her second year in college. She joined the faculty, teaching literature, religion and music. She became known on campus as "The Singing Nun," which endeared her to the students.

In 1976, she left the religious life after 14 years. "You could say I was an enigmatic, free-spirited person, and it came to a point where it was difficult for me to stay in that kind of a structure," she said. "But Father James Reuter once told me as he held my face in his hands, 'You are still very much a nun at heart.' My leaving the convent had nothing to do with my relationship with God, who is the passion of my life."

Valdes worked for the Bancom and Ayala group of companies through the 1970s and early 1980s. She moved to the US in 1986. By then she had also worked as manager for Ballet Philippines and marketing director for the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

But she maintained close ties with Assumption. She visits the Philippines at least once a year, and continues to work with the alumni association. She is also a favorite lecturer and speaker during the school's retreats.

She never parted with her music, either. Few outside the local recording industry know that she collaborated on several hit songs popularized in the 1990s by the award-winning singer-composer Jose Mari Chan, a long-time personal friend.

Miracles

On Oct. 19, 2002, two days after a speaking engagement during Assumption's jubilee celebration, Valdes suffered a stroke and had to stay in a hospital here for about a month.

"I should have died," she said. To the doctors' amazement, she recuperated—and in record time. Her conclusion was: "God wanted me alive. I thought [maybe] He wanted me to record my songs and communicate a message of hope."

"Sandalwood" is a collection of songs that Pinky wrote before and after the stroke. She penned all the lyrics and, for some of the tracks, also the music.

The four interpreters are led by pop star Joey Albert, who is now based in Canada and has her own "miracle" story in relation to the project.

Albert was fighting a second bout with cancer when she recorded her share of the tracks in December last year. When they first met to discuss "Sandalwood," Valdes recalled, she couldn't see how Albert could sing.

"Her mouth was full of sores," the songwriter recounted. "'So I told her we would wait till she had finished the prescribed six chemotherapy sessions. But she said no, she'd do it after the third. And this is the miracle: she had no sores when she showed up for the recording! But right after the [sessions], all the sores came back."

Joining Albert onstage for the P1,000-per-seat concert tomorrow are former schoolmates Marilen Liwag Reambillo, Cicy Campbell and Laudette Zaragoza Banson. Cocoy Laurel is a guest performer.

Beneficiary groups are the US-based MedLend missions, which makes annual visits to the Philippines; the Chosen Children Village Foundation for abandoned and disabled kids; the Tahanang Walang Hagdanan; and the Assumption Mission in Bukidnon.

Valdes said the CD will actually have four launchings from August to December, with the three others set in San Francisco, New York and Vancouver. A Tagalog version, currently in the works, will be released in October.

'Fastest' judge among 6 Gender Justice awardees

From page A1

the Regional Trial Court Branch 31 here had been previously cited for his speedy disposition of cases: 354 in 1997, at an average rate of 30 a month. He also holds the national record for having only six pending cases at year's end, in 2001.

This time around, the citation is for "rendering gender-sensitive decisions on VAW (violence against women) cases"—without prejudice to the vaunted speed, of course.

To put it mildly, Ganay is the exact opposite, easily 10 times over—all right, 100—of Caloocan Judge Jaime T. Hamoy, who sat on two civil cases for 13 years.

The GJA is being given by the University of the Philippines' Center for Women's Studies, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, and other civic and women's organizations "amid the continuing practice of many judges and prosecutors to perpetuate the misconceptions against women victims of violence in their decisions."

Awarding rites are set on Wednesday at the Discovery Suites in Pasig City, with Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. as keynote speaker.

Judge Ma. Nimfa Penaco-Sitaca of the Misamis Occidental RTC topped the list. Judges Ganay and Judge Eloida Patricia de Leon-Diaz are the winners from Luzon; Edgar Garvilles from the Visayas; Jacob Malik from Mindanao; and Teodoro Bay from the National Capital Region.

The board of judges included former Justice Leonor Luciano; Sheila Coronel, executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism; and lawyer Lorna Kapunan of the Women's Business Council.

A special award will be given to Judge Bensaudi Arabani Sr. of the Shari'a Court in Mindanao, and two "novelty" awards to Judges Anthony Santos and Edgardo de los Santos. The organizers said 11 other judges will receive plaques of recognition.

Unprecedented feat

A native of San Fabian, Pangasinan, Ganay finished law at the University of the Philippines. He served as councilor in his hometown from 1972 to 1992. He also practiced law for 20 years, after which he was appointed to the judiciary in 1996—first as presiding judge, then as executive judge of the RTC.

In 1999, he received the Outstanding Filipino Achiever award for the "remarkably quick" disposition of cases in his sala.

He is also a recipient of the Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award from the Civil Service Commission in October 2002; Chief Justice Cayetano Arellano Award for Judicial Excellence in June 2002; Regional Centennial Judge Award from the Supreme Court in 2001; and the Outstanding RTC Judge of the Millennium in 2000.

On Aug. 30, 2003, he brought his case load down to zero, an unprecedented feat, when he penned his 577-page decision on a celebrated rape case.

The Supreme Court assigned Ganay to hear 13 cases of the Baguio Country Club involving the Ilusorio family, after judges in Baguio City reportedly inhibited themselves, or were disqualified.

He said he finished 12 of the cases in eight months, and that he expected to decide the last one in about two weeks.

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(PDI : August 1, 2, 7, 9, 14, 16, 21, 23 & 28, 30, 2004)

AFP wants to exhume body of bandit leader

From page A[illegible]

out in Maguindanao on Friday.

"There a[illegible] some people who doubt that he wa[illegible]cally killed so exhumation of the [illegible]dy is one option," Armed Forces information officer Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told the INQUIRER.

Lucero gave his assurances to Tahir's relatives and all Muslims that their "religious and cultural sensibilities would be respected" in case the body was exhumed.

Lucero also said that exhuming the body was an option to prevent a repetition of the controversy which surrounded the death of former Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself had announced that Sabaya was shot dead in a sea encounter with the military in 2002 but his body also was not recovered, triggering speculation that he had survived the encounter.

The military could only produce Sabaya's trademark sunglasses and other personal belongings.

The military and police have insisted that Tahir was killed and quoted residents as telling soldiers that the man was buried Friday night in line with the Islamic custom which requires a Muslim to be buried within 24 hours of his death.

The military yesterday said one of Tahir's wives confirmed the Pentagon gang leader was killed during the military assault.

Col. Agustin Dema-ala, chief of the 604th Infantry Brigade, told the INQUIRER the remains were immediately buried by his followers in Sitio Tatak in Midpandan.

Alonto's Christian wife, Aloha, a native of Banga town in South Cotabato, confirmed his death, Dema-ala said.

Aside from Aloha, Tahir had a wife named Theresa, a resident of Pimbalayan, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat. He reportedly had three other wives.

But Deputy Director Gen. Virtus Gil, head of the police Task Force Mindanao which led the attack, said there was no need for an exhumation if only to prove that Tahir was dead.

5 witnesses

Gil said that at least five residents, who purportedly witnessed the burial, had volunteered to execute sworn statements and even show Tahir's graveyard to authorities.

"Alonto Tahir is dead and we have several witnesses to prove it," Gil said.

He said obtaining the witnesses' sworn statements was also important so that the government could reward the lone "asset" the Philippine National Police had used in identifying the whereabouts of Tahir and his slain followers.

Tahir and six other Pentagon gang members were buried in the evening of Aug. 13 in Sitio Tatak, Barangay Midpandakan, SK Pentadun, Maguindanao, according to a PNP report.

The bodies of eight other slain gang members were taken by relatives and buried the same night in nearby Liguasan Marsh, the same report said. In all, there were 15 kidnappers, including Tahir, killed in the Friday attack.

The report identified the other fatalities as Tungcon Ampalid, Tel Sulanin, Tugkias Dong, and aliases, Ronnie, Kambang, Guapo, Tambok, Bong, Paitem, Pots, Gulabar, Toks, Pangkog/Ting and Ambi.

Big blow to terrorists

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu had told the INQUIRER and ANC television that Tahir survived the bombing of his hideout but was seriously wounded.

The military and police said that far more important than questions about Tahir's death was that Friday's attack dealt a big blow to kidnappers and terrorists in the country.

"It sent a very strong signal that there's no safe haven for terrorists here in the Philippines, that the government will get them wherever they hide," Gil said.

The Pentagon is no ordinary kidnap gang. It has been linked to some high-profile abductions in recent years, such as those of Italian priest Guiseppe Pierantoni, five Chinese engineers and a South Korean treasure hunter.

Christian V. Esguerra in Manila; Rosa-May V. de Guzman and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Gov't-MILF peace talks to resume

A NEW round of peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is to begin in Malaysia this week, a rebel spokesperson said yesterday.

"We look forward (to) a cordial meeting," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said. "We hope to sign new agreements to further hasten the peace process and end the hostilities in Mindanao."

Government negotiators could not be immediately reached for comment, and Kabalu did not give specific dates for the talks.

The MILF has been fighting for an independent Islamic state in the South since 1978.

It signed a ceasefire agreement with the government in 2002, but allegations that it had links to the Southeast Asian Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) militants, who had been blamed for the October 2002 Bali bombings, had hindered the peace process.

Among the expected talking points is the MILF's demand for a total withdrawal of troops from Buliok, the former rebel camp in central Mindanao that was overrun by the military in 2000.

MILF negotiators are also expected to demand the dropping of criminal charges against several MILF leaders accused of plotting the deadly 2002 bombings of an airport and a wharf in Davao City that left scores dead.

AFP

RP finance sleuth stalks terrorists

From page A1

death threats by telephone, he said.

Formed after the Philippines passed the landmark Anti-Money Laundering Act in October 2001, the council is the government's financial intelligence agency.

Aquino, a former university lecturer who began his law enforcement career as a tough-as-nails state prosecutor in Manila, became the council secretariat's first executive director after a stint as head of the central bank's special operations section.

He completed a financial investigators' course at the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Academy in Virginia in 2002.

"We'd rather do our job quietly and discreetly, without fanfare. We are more comfortable with that," he said. "We still have some vacant positions to be filled up and we are in the process of recruiting qualified people."

The agency monitors millions of transaction reports from banks, securities dealers and brokers, insurance companies and other financial institutions—all mandated to report transactions that exceed the P500,000 (about $9,000) daily threshold.

Number-crunching computers and certified public accountants and information technology experts analyze patterns "in the hope that we will find something suspicious, which will trigger an investigation and possible prosecution," Aquino said.

Frozen accounts

The agency has frozen accounts worth P1 billion ($17.85 million), and recently helped the British police track down and repatriate $750,000 in pyramid scam accounts.

Its lawyers have filed criminal cases in court against 25 suspected money launderers and civil forfeiture cases against 23 other accounts.

The council has yet to lose a case.

Aquino, a beefy 52-year-old lawyer, likens himself to a fisherman, trawling in a large body of water that is the global financial system.

"No system is perfect, but we and the covered institutions are doing our best to make sure all our nets do not have any holes and do not allow the fish to escape," he said.

Congress has yet to pass an antiterrorism law, but Aquino said his agency was providing intelligence to counterpart agencies abroad under a special authority from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Aquino also regularly sends out staff members abroad to study at FBI-run training courses on international law enforcement.

Mindanao, home to a decades-old Moro separatist rebellion, is considered a training ground of Southeast Asian militants allied to the al-Qaida network.

Over the past year, the military and police there have arrested three suspected terrorist financiers who allegedly laundered about $75,000 through banks and at least one money-changer shop.

Despite the council's efforts, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an anti-money laundering initiative of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, still lists the Philippines as a money laundering haven alongside the likes of Burma (Myanmar) and Nigeria.

"We don't deserve to be in that list anymore because we have actually addressed all the concerns of the FATF," Aquino said.

AFP

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, August 16, 2004
20th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezk 24:15-24
Gospel: Mt 19:16-22

A young man approached him and asked, "Master, what good work must I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus answered, "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Only one is Good. If you want to enter eternal life, keep the commandments." The young man said, "Which commandments?" Jesus replied, "Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal; do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself."

The young man said to him, "I have kept all these commandments, what is still lacking?" Jesus answered, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all that you possess and give the money to the poor and you will become the owner of a treasure in heaven. Then come back and follow me."

On hearing this answer, the young man went away sad for he was a man of great wealth.

Commentary

Today's reading touches the DIY person in all of us, the "self-made man". We all want to succeed at what we do-who would set out to fail?-but we know when it goes into exaggeration. Nothing fails like success, someone said. I suppose that means, in part, that while we nearly always learn from failure we seldom learn from success. The young man in today's reading was a success. He had a certain openness to something beyond that (or was it to be just more of the same?); he said, "What else?" But it didn't prove to be a real openness; he refused to take the step. We have to be at the end of our tether before we really change. We have to fail. This is the pattern of Christ's own life and death. It was well expressed by the strange 17th-century mystic Jacob Boehme, "If you are to put on Christ's nature, you must go through his Journey, from the Incarnation to the Ascension. For Sophia (Wisdom) is wed to the soul only through that quality which springs up in the soul through the death of Christ.... Then it flowers as a new plant in Eternity."

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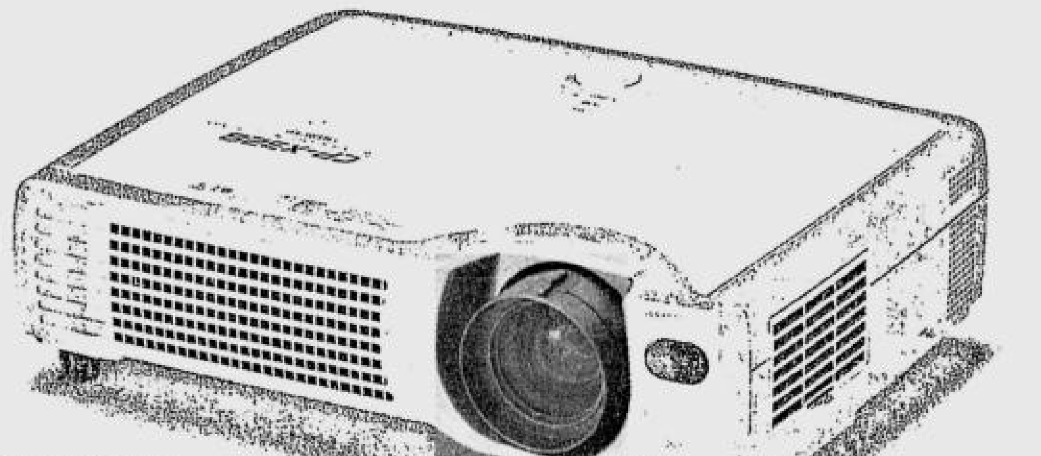

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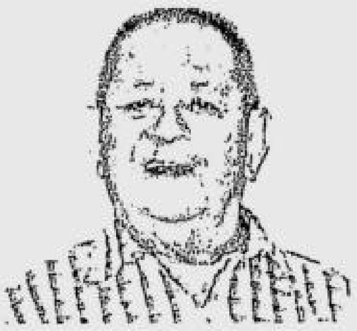
APPEAL BY SIMNY GUY, SISTERS GRACE, GERALDINE AND GLADYS: "PLEASE SHOW US OUR FATHER"

We, the distraught wife and daughters of Mr. Francisco Guy, who was taken away by our own son Gilbert to an unknown location five (5) months ago, would like to announce to the public that we are offering a reward of One Million Pesos(P1,000,000.00) to anyone who can provide information that will lead to the whereabouts of Francisco.

Upon the suggestion of relatives, friends, and colleagues in the business community, together, we have raised one million to anyone who can give us information that will lead us to where Papa is.



Francisco Guy

We would also like to express our gratitude to our relatives and friends who gave the suggestion and even contributed money for the reward.

Your father and I will die soon Gilbert. Please allow us to spend the rest of our lives together. ***Maikli na lang ang buhay namin. Buong buhay magkasama kami ng Papa mo at ginawa naming lahat para maging maganda ang buhay mo.*** **Please let me embrace your father before one of us dies.**

Sa mga tao, maawa po kayo. Tulungan ninyo ako para makita si Soon See. Gusto ko siyang makita at mahawakan.

Together with your sisters, Grace, Gladys and Geraldine, I would like to reiterate our promise that we are willing to help you with your financial problems. "Don't be desperate about your problems with money. We will help you. Do not hurt your father. He's been good to us, especially to you.

Please stop harassing us. Puro kami babae at walang laban sa iyo. All we want is to see our father alive before it's too late.

Any information leading to the whereabouts of Mr. Francisco Guy may contact VICTOR L. CHAN LAW OFFICE & ASSOCIATES at 7246629 and 7219283. The public is assured that all information relayed to the law office and the identities of those providing the information will be strictly confidential.

SIMNY, GRACE, GLADYS, GERALDINE GUY

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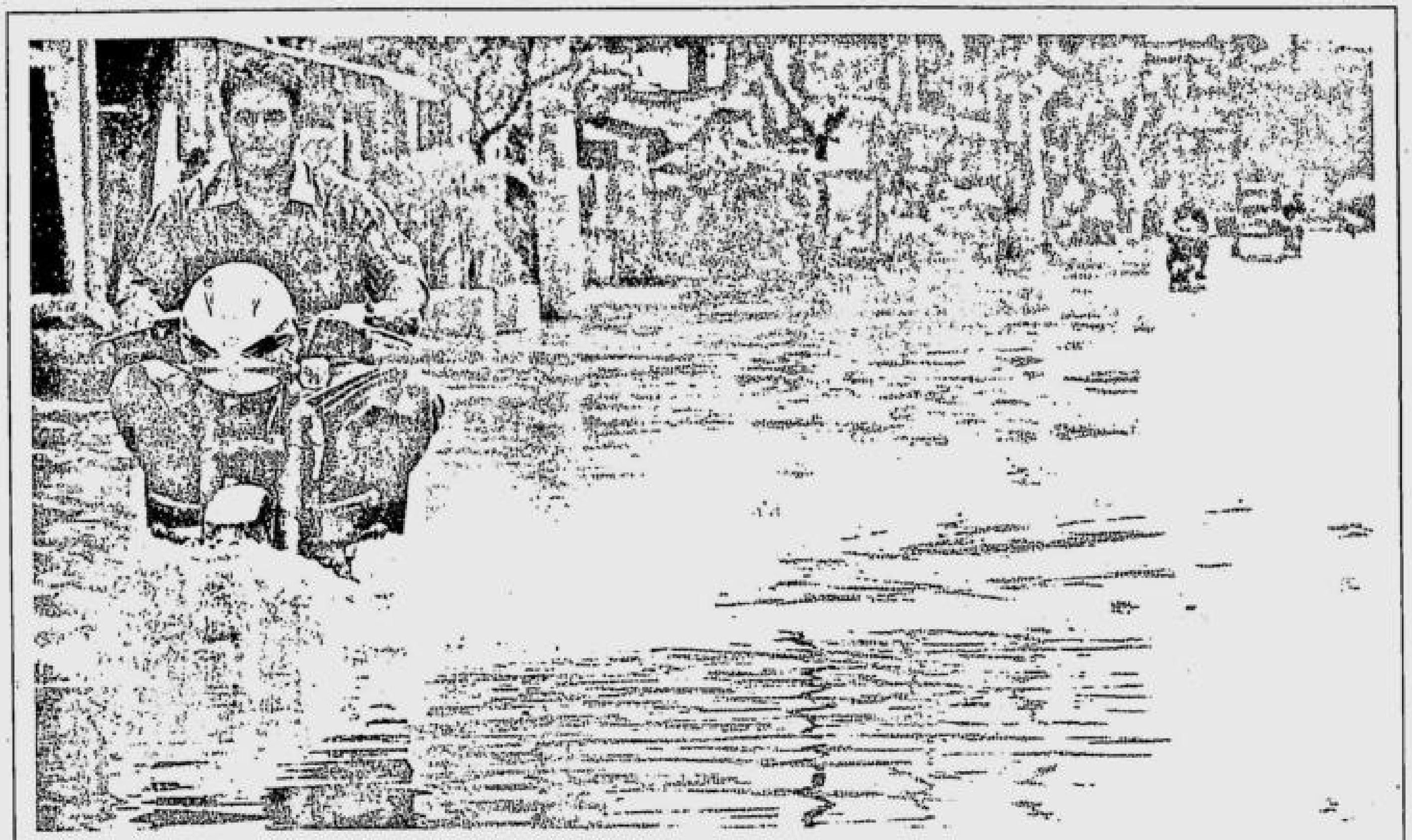

LIVING UP TO ITS NAME

RANDY HORMILLOSA

A motorcycle driver cuts through flooded Dagat-Dagatan Avenue in Caloocan City after a sudden downpour Sunday morning left the road under six inches of water.

By Margaux C. Ortiz

BEGINNING today, erring drivers can keep their licenses but may have to part with their money if they fail to comply with the rules of the new Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) scheme.

Under the new system, traffic enforcers would no longer confiscate drivers' licenses. Instead, they would issue an MTT for which the motorist could pay the fine at any Metrobank branch.

"By removing the hassles in the old system, drivers are expected to no longer resort to bribing a traffic enforcer to avoid inconvenience," said Chair Bayani Fernando of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA).

Warning aired

However, Fernando told motorists to immediately settle traffic fines.

Fernando yesterday said over his weekly radio program on dzBB that violators could pay as much as thrice the original fine if they ignore their traffic tickets.

"If the motorist fails to pay the fine within seven days, he would have to pay twice the original price," Fernando said.

And if a defiant violator is caught on the road with an unredeemed ticket, he would be forced to pay thrice the original fine.

Renewal to be barred

Also, drivers and vehicle owners with unsettled violations will be barred from renewing their licenses or vehicle registration.

Authorized MTT Issuing Officers could be identified through a patch above their left breast pocket.

Meanwhile, motorists having complaints regarding traffic enforcers or the violation being slapped against them can call 136 to call roadside adjudicators.

Protection of herons fly high

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PROTECTION starts with education.

Streamers now fly near Villa Encarnacion in Barangay Malanday, Valenzuela City, warning residents not to harm black-crowned night herons thriving nearby.

The signs were put up by barangay officials and by local politicians.

One poster, citing the Wildlife Act of the Philippines, warns residents they could be fined up to P20,000 and imprisoned up to six years should they harm the birds.

Ordinance proposed

Two city councilors are proposing an ordinance to protect the herons and other migratory birds in several areas in the city, but it will take a month before the proposal is approved.

Under the proposal, persons who would be caught catching or harming the birds would have to pay up to P5,000 in fines and plant 10 trees.

Village president Lorenzo Bogayan told the INQUIRER they had been looking after the herons near their houses since they first saw the birds in 2000.

No longer helpless

But then they did not have the power to hold accountable those who caught or killed the birds.

Now, the villagers are happy that people are learning to appreciate the herons through the media and through government attention, Bogayan said.

The rescue on Tuesday of a wounded heron brought attention to the plight of hundreds of herons and other migratory birds which have been thriving in parts of the city. The rescued heron, named Olan, is under treatment.

Thai ship in collision sued, barred from sailing

By Clarissa S. Batino

NEGROS Navigation Co. (Nenaco) would ask the Manila Regional Trial Court to extend a 72-hour temporary restraining order issued Friday against the foreign cargo vessel M/V Sea Celebrity.

Nenaco said the Sea Celebrity slammed into its Bacolod-bound M/V Saint Joseph the Worker Thursday afternoon on Manila Bay, causing damage that would need three weeks to repair.

The shipping subsidiary of Metro Pacific Co. filed a P20-million damage suit against the owner of the Sea Celebrity before the Manila court last Friday which issued the TRO. However, the restraining order lapses this afternoon.

Nenaco spokesperson Gian Galvez said the shipping firm would likely ask the court to extend the TRO as the company has yet to get in touch with the owner of the foreign cargo vessel.

The Sea Celebrity is reportedly registered in Thailand and has no definite route. The vessel is being held by the Coast Guard for further investigation, and for assessment of its obligations to Nenaco.

"Until now, we have no details on the owner and the operator. This is why we need the TRO to prevent the Sea Celebrity from sailing," said Galvez.

Galvez said the P20-million sought by Nenaco was only for damages and did not cover the losses the company would incur while its vessel was being repaired.

Another source said the Saint Joseph the Worker was one of Nenaco's most profitable vessels servicing the Bacolod and Iloilo routes. It carries cargo and passengers, and earns for the company P3 to P4 million each trip.

Nenaco said the collision bore a 44 meter-long and a meter-wide hold on the left hull of the Saint Joseph the Worker.

The collision could not have come at a worse time for Nenaco as it continues to buckle under the weight of continued losses.

Taguig gunplay probed

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THE NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) has formed a fact-finding body to look into the shootout Saturday between Taguig anti-drugs policemen and Regional Special Action Unit agents.

NCRPO chief of staff Leonardo Dionisio will head the committee, which will coordinate with officials of the Southern Police District, which has direct jurisdiction over the Taguig police, NCRPO Director Ricardo De Leon told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The shootout erupted after Taguig lawmen arrested two drug suspects Friday.

Taguig policemen said the suspects tried to bribe them but they rejected the offer. Later, however, members of the Regional Special Action Unit (RSAU) reportedly arrived and started accusing them of extortion.

The RSAU men reportedly insisted on arresting the anti-drugs policemen who resisted, prompting a shootout.

RSAU officials insist that the Taguig lawmen were trying to extort money from the suspects.

NCRPO spokesperson Bart Bustamante said both groups seemed to have violated some procedures.

METROBRIEFS

P10-M factory fire

A 10-HOUR fire razed a factory manufacturing cotton products in Las Piñas City yesterday, destroying an estimated P10 million worth of equipment and finished goods. Arson investigators said the fire, which razed Hawaiian Sun Cotton on CAA Road, Aguilar Avenue, Casimiro, began at 1:41 a.m. SFO3 Noel Consignado said three stay-in workers at the factory owned by Willy Cua saw flames engulfing raw materials in the production area after a power shortage. The workers, using a fire extinguisher, tried but failed to contain the fire, Consignado said..Nobody was reported hurt in the incident that was put out at 11:50 a.m.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Las Piñas action

LAS PIÑAS Mayor Imelda T. Aguilar is urging real property owners with outstanding taxes due to settle their delinquency or face auction of their properties by the end of the year. Aguilar said the city was expecting to collect millions of pesos from uncollected taxes should property owners cooperate. She stressed that revenue from delinquent taxes were necessary to ensure more and continuous delivery of basic services in Las Piñas, particularly health and education. City Treasurer Rizal Y. del Rosario revealed that delinquent real estate taxes due were mostly owed by commercial business establishments over the past 10 years.

Recollects' ministry

THE AUGUSTINIAN Recollects will commemorate on Thursday (Aug. 19) the feast of Saint Ezekiel Moreno with the launching of the Saint Ezekiel Moreno Healing Ministry at the Recollect novitiate house in Antipolo City. The saint is invoked as the patron of cancer victims. Ceremonies start at 9 a.m. For information, contract Fr. Leander Barrot, OAR, or Bro. Tagoy Jakosalem, OAR, at 951-2861 or 921-6103.

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Project Cost : P53,241,523.42
Project Start : Groundbreaking middle of August 2004
Project Completion : 90 days after groundbreaking
Beneficiaries : 6,500 households (around 46,000 residents) in Barangays 96 to 106, First District, Tondo

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Say hello to clean, potable and reliable water. This was the assurance that Manila mayor Lito Atienza and Maynilad Water Services Inc. president Fiorello Estuar (shown shaking hands in photo above) conveyed to the residents of Tondo last August 10, 2004 as they launched the Tondo Foreshore F-1 Zone Pilot Project, which will improve the water delivery system in Tondo. The launching was attended by (from left) MWSS Chief Regulator Ed Santos, MWSS Administrator Orlando Hondrade, barangay 102 chairman Felipe delos Santos, 1st district congressman Ernesto Nieva, F-1 Zone chairman and barangay 100 chairman Alberto Carpio and MWSS deputy administrator Macra Cruz (not in picture).

The project highlights Maynilad's commitment, under the initiatives of its new president, Fiorello Estuar (shown in photo above talking to the residents of F-1 Zone), to address the health concerns of Tondo residents by providing them with clean, potable water and to make Maynilad a viable concern.

The project features an innovative scheme in pipelaying to help hasten the work and minimize obstructions to pedestrian and vehicular traffic during construction. Instead of digging deep trenches where the pipes will be buried, the pipes will be laid almost at ground level, but embedded in cement and made integral to the curb and gutters. Diggings will only be done when pipes cross the street to minimize the inconvenience to the public.

A vital part of the project was the consultation with the barangays that comprise the pilot area. Prior to the launching, Central Business Area engineers, led by its manager, Philip Rosete (right in photo above addressing residents of Barangay 103), toured the eleven barangays involved and explained how the project will be implemented. As assistant business area manager Lito Gadia explained to the residents of Barangay 102 in one of the briefings (left in photo above), once completed, the project will provide the residents with clean and potable water at consistent pressure and volume.

The project is being piloted at F-1 and will expand to the rest of Tondo in the coming months. It is the response of Maynilad to the appeal of Mayor Atienza and the people of Tondo for the upgrading of the water system that was laid in the early 80's and which has, since then, deteriorated, leading to the leaks which, together with other factors, contributed to the gastro-enteritis outbreak during a 20-day period in October-November last year. Even as Maynilad grapples with its future, its men and women continue to look for ways to further improve the company's services to its customers, mindful of its mission of helping to improve the quality of life of the Filipino.

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Ⓖ Flex 3,500	P 3,500	400	P 4.00	P 4.50
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Brin brings joy to RP Olympians

But faster swimmers sink Pangilinan, Molina; wind gusts thwart Jethro

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.
News Editor

ATHENS—When everyone else stumbled, welterweight boxer Romeo Brin raised the banner once more and provided a ray of light and hope to an otherwise bleak day for the Philippines in the 28th Olympic Games here Sunday.

The 31-year-old Brin knocked down the taller Patrick Bogere of Sweden in the final round and scored a points victory that moved him a step closer to achieving the Philippine dream of an Olympic gold.

It was the first triumphant note of a Philippine campaign that has been highlighted by one setback after another after two days of competition in the sweltering heat of the Greek summer.

Elsewhere in the Games, the Filipinos were washed and blown away.

Jaclyn Pangilinan swam the race of her life but Miguel Molina just could not shake off his Olympic jitters as the two Filipino swimmers took different routes Sunday to the same destination—disappointment.

And shooter Jethro Dionisio bowed out of his first Olympic stint when he could not find his mark on the windy second and final day of the elimination in the men's trap shooting event.

At presstime, archer Jasmin Figueroa was to meet former world champion Natalia Valeeva of Italy in the elimination round of the women's individual event in the evening at the ancient Panathinaiko Stadium.

The Filipinos were hoping to end their string of misfortunes at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall later Sunday afternoon and Brin, who came out of retirement last year to qualify for his third Olympics, did not disappoint his teammates.

BRIN/A26

ATHENS 2004

ATHENS 2004 SCHEDULES

Aug. 16
AQUATICS
(Olympic Aquatic Center)
10:00-11:38
James R. Walsh — 200m Butterfly-Heats
BOXING (Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall)
13:30-17:00
19:30-23:00
Harry Tañamor — Light Flyweight 48 kg
AQUATICS
(Olympic Aquatic Center)
19:00-20:55
200m Freestyle — Finals
100m(women) Breastroke — Finals
200m Butterfly — Semifinals

Aug. 17
AQUATICS (Olympic Aquatic Center)
10:00-12:12
1) Miguel S. Molina — 200m Breastroke–Heats
19:00-20:46
200m Butterfly — Finals
200m Breastroke — Semifinals
ARCHERY (Panathinaiko Stadium)
8:30-12:00
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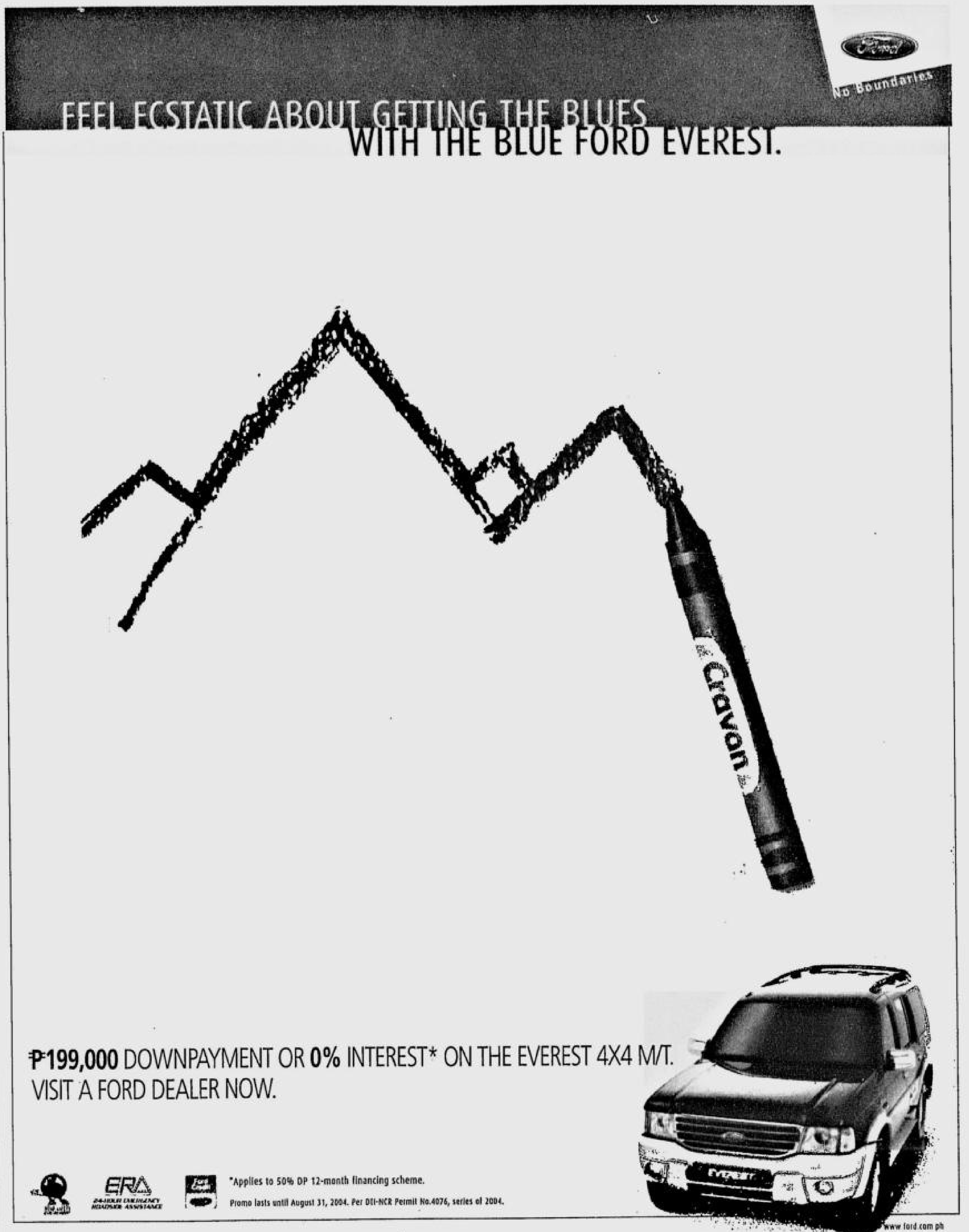
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Brave Brin delivers first victory

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.

ATHENS—Welterweight Romeo Brin won a hard-fought brawl against a tough opponent Sunday and gave the Philippines a shining moment on a day of heartbreaks in the 28th Olympic Games here.

Brin, who carried the Philippine flag during the opening ceremonies on Friday, did the same thing on the ring and won on points over Sweden's Patrick Bogere in the first round of the 64-kg division at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall.

The victory revived the medal hopes of the Filipinos, who suffered a setback on Saturday when Christopher Camat, the original choice as flag bearer, lost on points to Russia's Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov in the middleweight class.

Brin, now on his third Olympics, did justice to his choice as standard bearer, dominating the fight from the start, surviving a low blow in the third round and knocking down the lanky 22-year-old Swede after a furious exchange in the fourth.

The final score was 43-35.

The Filipino southpaw will next fight an even tougher opponent in the next round on Thursday—Thailand's Manus Boonjumnong, a points winner over local hero Spyridon Ioannidis in an earlier bout.

The 31-year-old Brin needed some time after the opening bell to find his range against the taller Bogere, born in Uganda and now fighting for Sweden. But when Brin found his range, he lost no time carrying the fight to his opponent.

A flurry of punches hurt the Swede so much he was given the standing count by referee David Sandoval. Although the Swede managed to sneak in a few punches of his own, the first round ended with Brin ahead, 9-6, under the electronic scoring in amateur boxing.

Although quicker on his feet and with his punches, Brin had a hard time against the longer range of his right-handed opponent. Still, he managed to stay on top after the second round, leading, 20-15.

The third round was furious with Brin slipping occasionally. Bogere was scoring points and closing in on the Filipino toward the end of the round when he delivered a low blow from what had looked like a poor attempt at a right uppercut.

Brin bent over from pain and was given a bonus—two points for a 26-17 lead and a long count to recover. By the time the third round ended, the Filipino was ahead, 32-23

Brin pressed the fight as the final round started and a combination to the head and body knocked the Swede down for the count with 21 seconds gone in the round. That gave him a 35-25 lead with 99 minutes left in the fight.

But Bogere won't let him rest and the Filipino decided to mix it up, dangerously exposing himself to disaster so close to victory. He managed to come out on top of every exchange, however, and when the bell rang to end the fight, Brin had a 43-35 victory.

The rest of the Philippine delegation, bogged down by one setback after another, celebrated the victory with Brin.

"We're all happy," said boxing leader and former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez.

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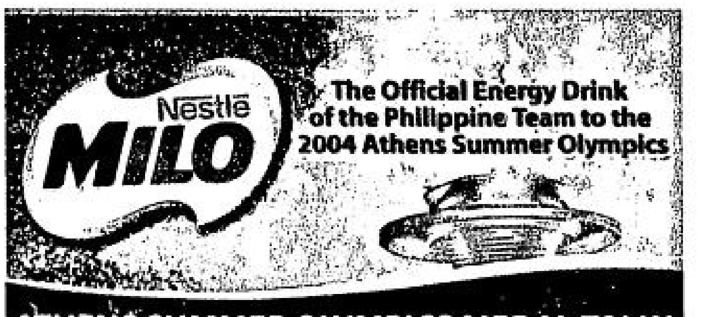

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ATHENS SUMMER OLYMPICS MEDAL TALLY

Country	G	S	B	Total
China	4	1	1	6
Australia	2	1	3	6
Russia	1	3	1	5
United States	1	3	1	5
Italy	2	1	0	3
Ukraine	2	0	1	3
Japan	2	0	0	2
Hungary	0	1	1	2
Turkey	1	0	0	1
France	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Britain	0	1	0	1
Portugal	0	1	0	1
Serbia and Montenegro	0	1	0	1
Argentina	0	0	1	1
Belgium	0	0	1	1
Bulgaria	0	0	1	1
Czech Republic	0	0	1	1
Germany	0	0	1	1
South Korea	0	0	1	1
Mongolia	0	0	1	1
Netherlands	0	0	1	1
Thailand	0	0	1	1
Total	15	15	17	47

Brin brings joy to RP

From page A25

Brin, the Philippine flag bearer in the parade of athletes during Friday's opening ceremonies after officials pulled out Christopher Camat to rest him for the next day's fight, dominated the younger Bogere from the start.

The Filipino southpaw, now on a possibly final stint in the Olympics, had to survive a low blow in the third round and a desperate charge by the Swede in the fourth to eke out a 43-35 victory.

Brin hurt Bogere for a standing count in the first round and knocked down the Ugandan-born Swede for another count with 1:39 left in the furious fourth and final round.

Brin's next assignment will be a classier and more skillful opponent —Manus Boonjumnong of Thailand, who outclassed Greek hero Spiridon Ioannidis on points one bout earlier.

They will clash on Thursday night. If he hurdles that assignment, Brin will be in line for a date with the division's top favorites, either Alexander Maletin of Russia or Willy Blain of France.

Molina and Pangilinan were both eliminated from their events in the action-filled competition at the main pool of the Olympic Aquatic Center.

Molina finished seventh in his heat and 42nd overall out of 59 starters in the men's 200-meter freestyle while Pangilinan wound up fifth in her heat in the women's 100-m breaststroke and 31st in the field of 48.

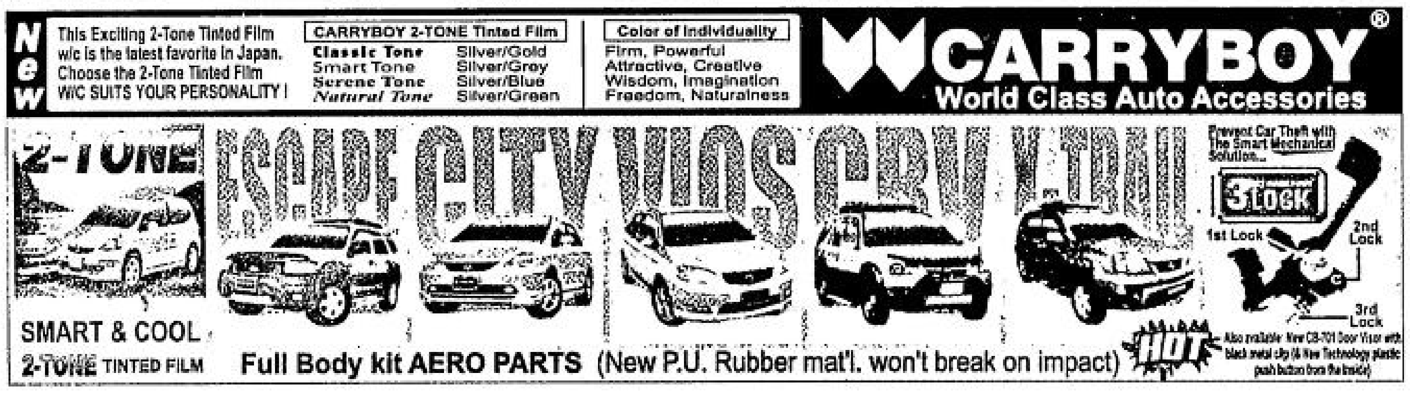
"I'm not happy with my swim," lamented the 19-year-old Molina. "I was expecting a little more from myself."

Pangilinan, the US-based Harvard-bound teenager, led her heat but faded in the final 10 m, consoling herself with a personal record of one minute and 12.47 seconds. Her previous best, set in last year's US swimming national championship in Maryland, was 1:12.82.

A high school honors student who is bound for Harvard on an athletic scholarship, Pangilinan is 18 years old with a Filipino father and a Syrian mother.

Cheered on by her parents, her coach and a contingent of 11 friends and relatives, Pangilinan jumped off to a good start in her heat, leading through the first 25 m and at the turn. She looked strong going into the final 25 but the rest of the field caught up

BRIN/A31



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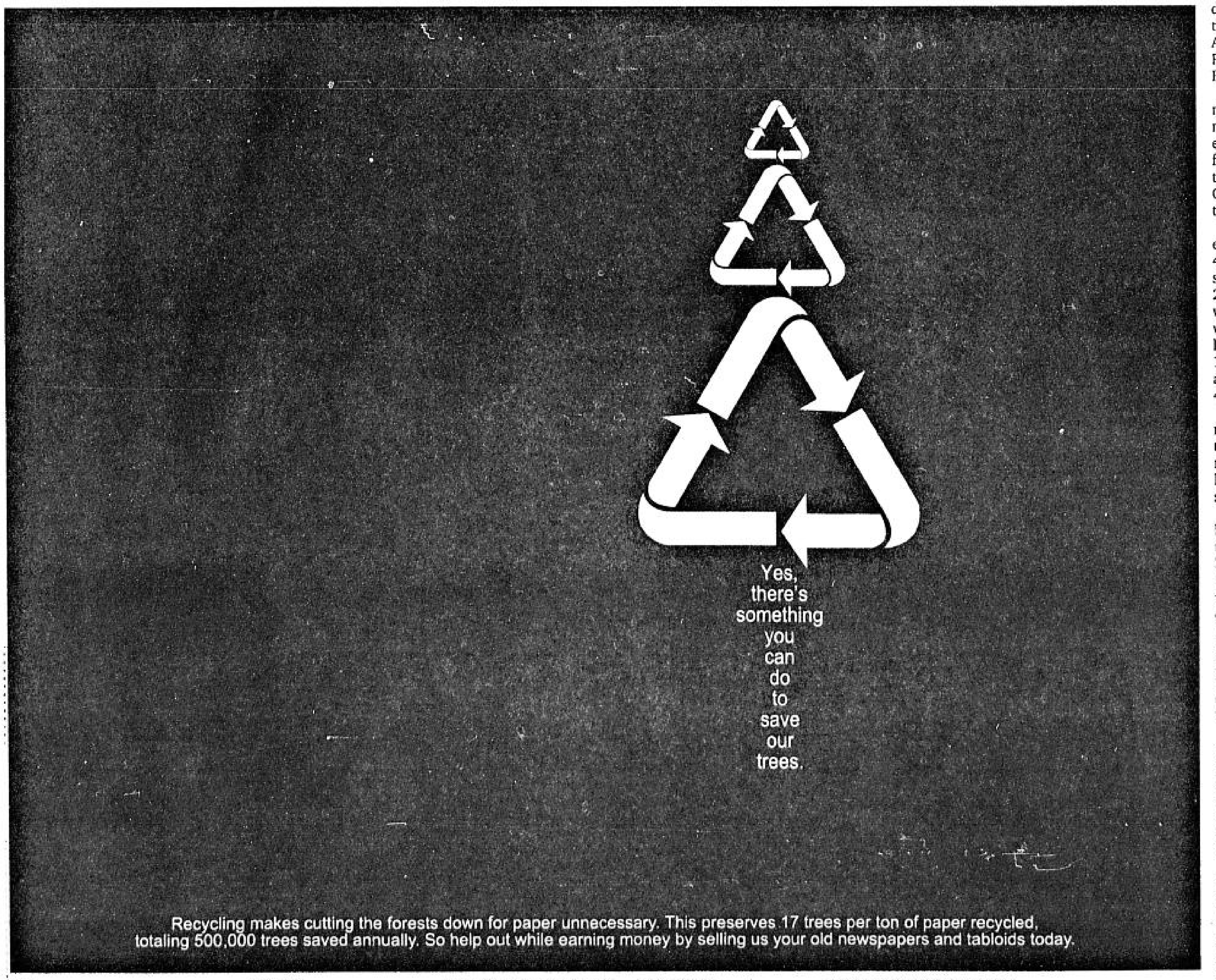

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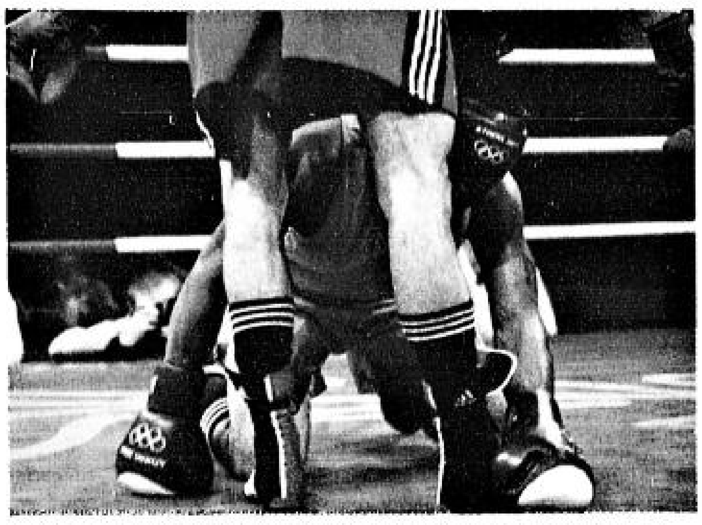
News that makes a difference in the environment



FILIPINO Christopher Camat falls to his knees and went on to lose to Russia's Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov Saturday. AP

Red Lions, Dolphins try to boost Final 4 chances

THE SAN Beda Red Lions and Philippine Christian U Dolphins try to boost their respective Final Four campaigns when they face separate opponents today in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Makati Coliseum.

The Dolphins face the slumping St. Benilde Blazers at 1 p.m., while the Lions battle the Jose Rizal Bombers at 3.

After inconsistent performances in the first round, San Beda opened its second-round campaign by beating erstwhile leader University of Perpetual Help.

San Beda and PCU have 5-4 slates, behind Perpetual's 6-4 card. Letran and San Sebastian pace the pack with identical 7-3 records.

San Beda coach Nash Racela is glad his team is back in contention. "We've put the first round behind us and we're looking at the second round with a more positive outlook," he said.

PCU mentor Loreto Tolentino is similarly optimistic: "We hope to play better in the next few games so we can reach the Final Four. I've been staying in the team's quarters because I want to check on my players," he said.

JRU, meanwhile, aims to bounce back after absorbing losses from Letran and San Sebastian. Wynsjohn Te and Ken Coyukang are still doubtful starters, however, after spraining their knees in their last outing. *Jasmine W. Payo*

STANDINGS	W	L
Letran	7	3
SSC	7	3
Perpetual	6	4
PCU	5	4
San Beda	5	4
Mapua	5	5
JRU	3	6
St. Benilde	0	9

GAMES TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
9:30 a.m.—St. Benilde vs PCU (Jrs)
11:15 a.m.—San Beda vs JRU (Jrs)
1 p.m.—St. Benilde vs PCU (Srs)
3 p.m.—San Beda vs JRU (Srs)

RP boxers can't afford to be tame and sweet

BARE EYE
Recah Trinidad

THERE'S only one thing you could wish Chris Camat.

You want the boxer to succeed.

He's so nice and gentle you want him to make it big.

On Saturday in Athens, Chris did everything, he gave it all, his best, to make his countrymen feel good.

The poor fellow failed.

And we, from GMA and Rene Saguisag down to the poor *caminero*, suffered with him in that defeat.

No, Camat did not land on the floor, although he was given a couple of standing eight-counts.

It was a mercy act, a necessity in Olympic boxing.

Otherwise, his comebacking Russian foe, a silver medalist in the Sydney Olympics, would've inflicted irreparable damage.

***

Thank God, too, that the discipline included the fitting of thick leather gears around the boxer's head.

At least, with the Russian sharp-shooter raining a tattoo of punches, Camat was shielded from undue savagery.

He also managed to survive the entire bout.

Yes, that was merciful enough because the total texture of the fight would show that Camat did not only lose on points.

He was totally outclassed.

The mismatch was so horrible the combatants appeared as though they did not belong to the same middleweight bracket.

***

Well, there was no way they could've thrown in the towel.

There was no preventing the mismatch because, first of all, Camat had qualified for the Olympic proper via a silver-medal finish in the Asian Boxing Championship staged in Puerto Princesa earlier.

Of course, a built-in damper in his Olympic stint was the sorry fact that Camat had suffered a stoppage in the Asian final before going to Athens.

Yes, Camat had wanted to do his countrymen proud.

On the whole, though, he looked tame and sweet inside the ring where you had to be both slippery and sharp to succeed.

If Camat had in any way packed some steel and menace, these were skillfully offset, cooled and overshadowed by the whooping inborn edge of the Russian in build and ringmanship.

***

Too bad that he appeared small, friendly, an all-too-willing gift, to his opponent.

You may not need a microscope to measure the discrepancy, but a plain look showed that Camat suffered greatly in physical comparison to his foe.

He was too small for his bracket.

Now here: The sorry thing here is that lightwelterweight Romeo Brin, scheduled to fight at this reporting, is caught in the same dilemma as Camat's.

He, too, is not a natural, he's not truly at home in his division that's regularly dominated by Europeans, Americans, Cubans, etc. but never by Orientals.

Brin, who had never been able to advance in his two previous Olympic stints in Atlanta and Sydney, was also expected to give it his all.

No, he may not end up too tame and chummy as Camat had appeared in his fight Saturday.

But, with his Asian build, Brin will predictably resort to a wild, unorthodox mode.

He may have to again break away from the established scientific style of Olympic boxing, slug blindly, with the hope of scoring his first win.

***

It could either be over or it could be on with the show for Brin when this column comes out.

As for Camat, he should console himself and say that, unlike in Puerto Princesa, he was not officially counted out in his first Olympic stint.

But survival not being the motto of the national boxing team, we could only wish that Camat's sorry stand was already the lowest point in the RP boxing expedition in Athens.

At least, after Brin, the next two RP boxers, flyweight Violito Payla and light fly Harry Tañamor, will definitely be at home in their respective divisions, where Asians had shown their mettle and, in fact, won Olympic gold medals.

They won't be left out to wade and grope in the division of giants.

Payla and Tañamor, it's safe to say, should be able to show the Olympic world that Pinoy brown dolls are neither tame nor sweet.

Fil-German leads advance of faves

FILIPINO-GERMAN Matthids Wolff ousted Juan Fidel Regis, 6-0, 6-4, in the boys' 14-under division yesterday to pace the winners at the start of the adidas Tennis Challenge 2004 at the Yñares Sports Complex in Pasig. Eman Yousif, who routed Maha Assad, 6-0, 6-1, and fellow Saudi Arabia-based netter Latifa Ahmad as well as Germaine Klimachewski, towed the field in the girls' 14-under class of the tournament organized by CTW, supported by Milo and Globe and sanctioned by Philta. They were joined in the next round by Clarisse Patrimonio, who whipped JV Custodio, 6-3, 6-0. In the unisex 10-under bracket, Deo Talatayod blanked Majed Ahmad, 6-0, 6-0; Lexter Quitara trounced Patricia Orteza, 6-0, 6-1; and Calvin Canlas whipped Enrique Ferrer, 6-2, 6-0.

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IT'S GREEN AND GO FOR THE ENDURO SAN MIG LIGHT MANILA LEG

Make way for another grueling episode of the Enduro San Mig Light Adventure Race, which gears up for a more intense and extreme workout in its second leg in Metro Manila on Aug 20-21. The race will kick off at the Eastwood City grounds.

The second leg, which has been stretched to a 2 day-long affair, is going to be one challenge spiced up with new and different tasks that will surely leave the racers bushed but nevertheless fulfilled.

The tasks, inspired by reality television shows such as Survivor and Fear Factor, include trekking rugged and demanding terrain for three hours that would bring the racers all around Metro Manila, braving deep waters and slithering down ravines along the corners of EDSA.

What makes this leg different and more exciting than other adventure races on local soil is that racers will also have to go through challenges involving the internet and other high-tech stuff.

San Mig Light, the right alcohol and low-caloric beer, which for years has supported outdoor adventure and endurance sports, is inviting race enthusiasts and sports aficionados to be part of this annual event in its quest to take adventure racing to higher ground and encourage the younger generation to indulge in sports.

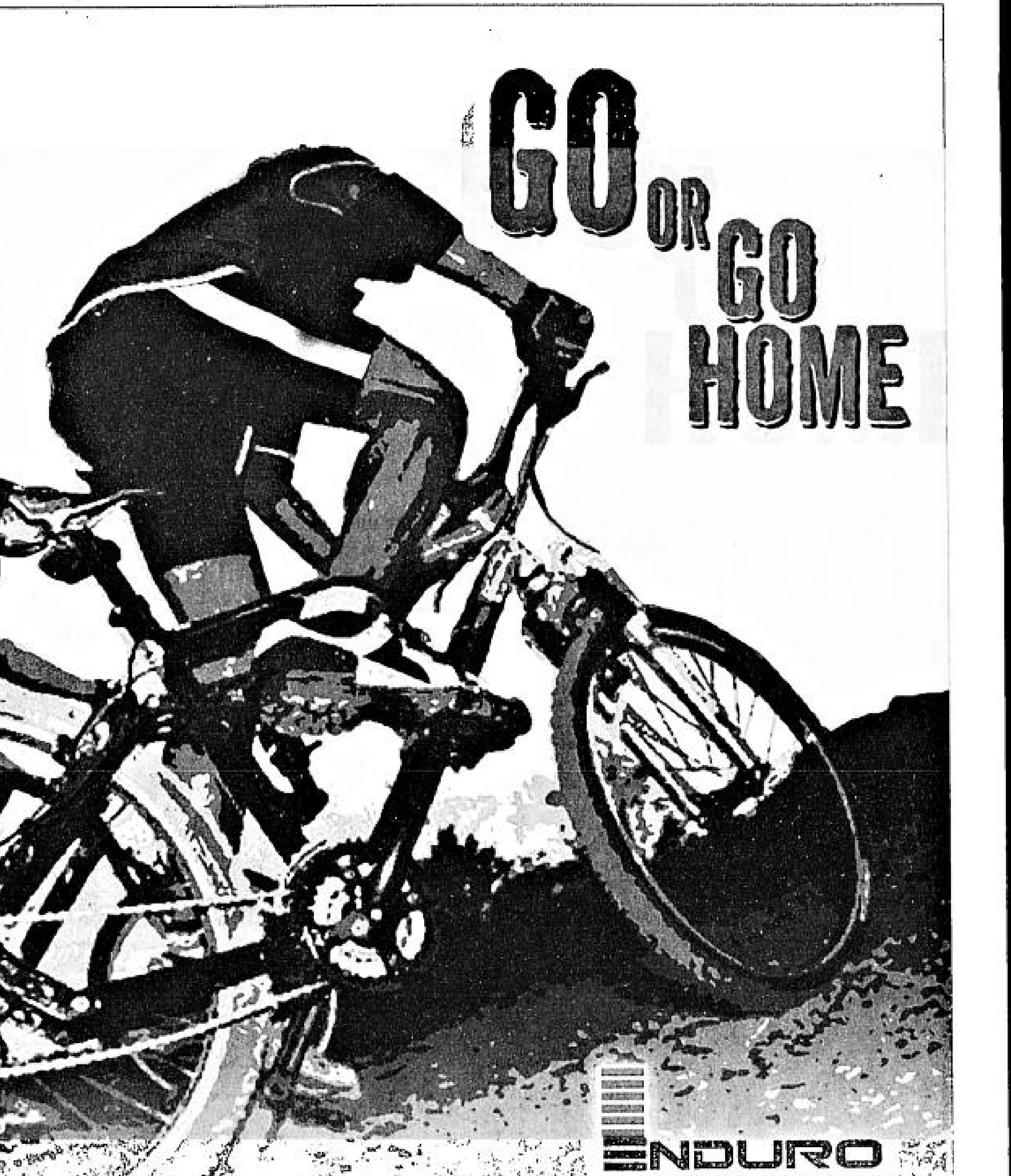
The race is divided into two categories: the 24-30-hour Elite Race for serious racers, and the 6-8-hour Fun Race. A total of 80 three-member teams will take part in the race.

For interested participants, call the Enduro hotline at (632) 4128660 or text ENDURO to 386 for Smart subscribers or log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph for race details.

More than P200,000 will be up for grabs in the second leg.

The technical team of the Manila leg has ensured the quality, safety, and the degree of difficulty of the different stages of the race.

The race uses a non-sequential, station-to-station system. All teams will start en masse from a designated starting line, and will pass through all stations in a non-sequential order and arrive at the finish line after before a designated cut-off time.
ADVT.



They're off! The Enduro San Mig Light Adventures is firing up its second leg. The fierce competition that started in Boracay now blazes on in Eastwood City. P35,000 awaits the winner of the challenging Fun category and P75,000 goes to the winner of the highly intense Elite Race. So if you feel like diving, biking, climbing, leaping, rappelling and competing this August 20 and 21, call 412-8660 or log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph to register. Smart and Talk and Text subscribers may also text ENDURO to 386.
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Jun Nicdao, KBP

"There is a need for values formation and for education. Because only with this will we be able to try to change the Filipinos' liking for insubstantial political advertisements..."
Jun Perez, OAAP

"The political candidates distort and suppress the truth, so rather than bringing people together, they are the instrument for driving them apart ... creating mistrust, conflict and factions in people."
Atty. Jo Imbong, CBCP

"The result of the previous elections proved that political advertising, instead of leveling-off the playing field, gives edge to the political candidates with money... those who can afford to air many political ads are the politicians who win"
Rina David, Philippine Daily Inquirer

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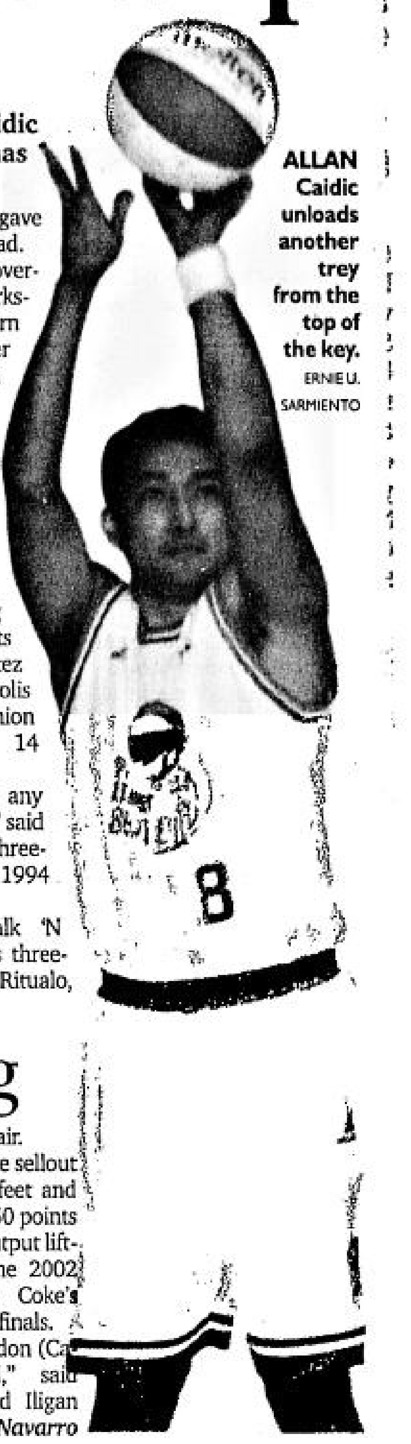
Caidic still deadly, whips 3-pt champ

By June Navarro

CEBU—It's been half a decade since Allan Caidic hung up his sneakers. Everyone, it seems, has found his shoes still too big to fill.



ALLAN Caidic unloads another trey from the top of the key. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Known as "The Triggerman," Caidic again showed the current crop of PBA shooters a fraction of his deadly form in the Legends Shootout Challenge Saturday night at the Mandaue Sports Center here.

Caidic towed his team, composed of fellow ex-snipers Al Solis, Boy Cabahug and Roel Gomez, to an astounding 55-43 victory over the top three-point shooters of the league.

Newly crowned three-point king Ronald Tubid of Shell, Alaska's Mike Cortez, Renren Ritualo of FedEx and Ginebra's Mark Caguioa could do nothing but cringe at the sight of Caidic turning the tightly fought contest into a blowout.

Caidic, who now sits as team manager of the Barangay Ginebra Kings, widened the 37-36 edge the Legends were holding following Solis' solid 16-point performance by shooting almost flawlessly on every rack.

Caidic scored 18 points in the 60-second, five-rack, five-ball-per-rack contest, including a pair of money baskets that gave the Legends a 55-36 spread.

Tubid was deeply overwhelmed by Caidic's marksmanship that when his turn came, the Shell slasher could only come up with seven points.

"It was pure luck. I immediately got my rhythm after sinking the first two baskets and everything went according to what I had hoped for," said Caidic.

Gomez and Cabahug combined for 21 points while Caguioa and Cortez tied the count before Solis provided a 37-36 cushion following Ritualo's 14 points.

"I really didn't have any plan to join the contest," said Caidic, the 1992 PBA three-point champion and 1994 runner-up.

Tubid dislodged Talk 'N Text's Jimmy Alapag as three-point king as he beat Ritualo, 18-16, in the finals.

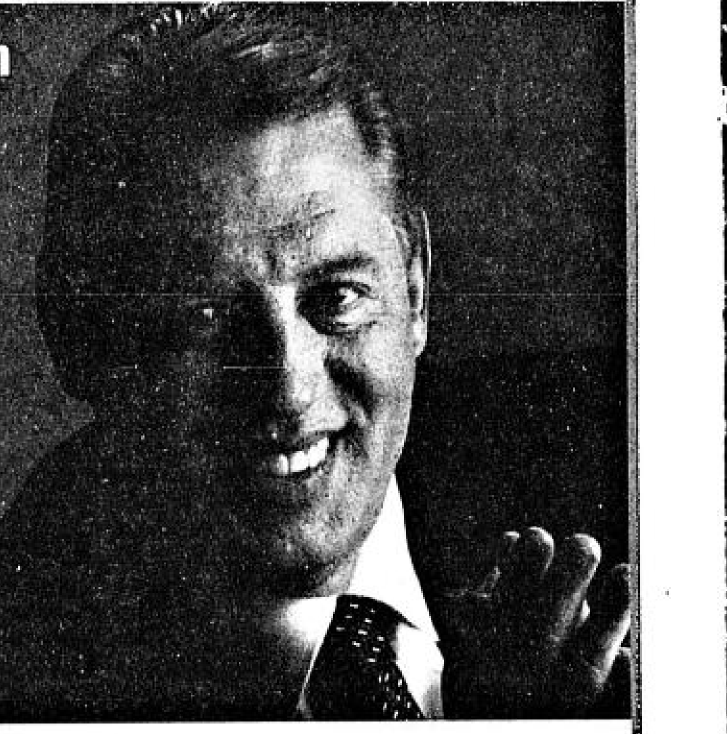
Baguio 'slam' king

CEBU CITY—Cyrus Baguio of Red Bull Barako outshone San Miguel Beer's Joey Mente to capture the 2004 Slam Dunk contest yesterday in the PBA All-Star Week before raving Cebuano fans at the Cebu Coliseum here.

The high-leaping Red Bull Barako slasher clinched the crown after perfectly executing a two-hand reverse slam off a hand-off by Sta. Lucia Realty's Nelbert Omolon in mid-air.

Baguio's dunk sent the sellout crowd of 5,000 on its feet and drew a perfect score of 50 points from the judges. That output lifted him past Mente, the 2002 slam-dunk king, and Coke's Reynel Hugnatan in the finals.

"I'm quite lucky Brandon (Cablay) wasn't around," said Baguio, the 23-year-old Iligan native. *June Navarro*



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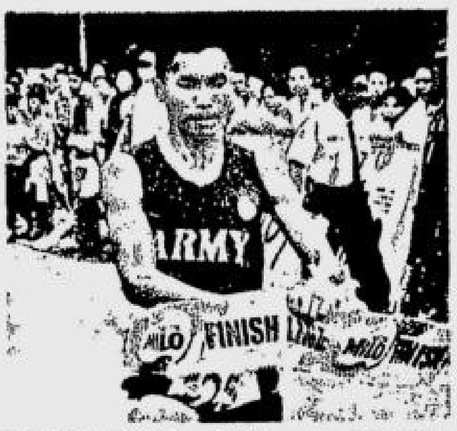
Reli gets back at tormentor; Sevilleno wins



BACK ON TOP: Rogelio Reli crosses the finish.

CEBU CITY—Rogelio Reli exacted revenge and Christy Sevilleno stretched her winning streak to three in topping the Central Visayas elimination race yesterday of the National Milo Marathon at the Cebu Business Park here.

Reli, who finished second behind Bowen Montecillo here last year, got even by beating the latter in yesterday's race.

Sevilleno drew little resistance from the field to win her third straight leg title despite breasting the tape with stomach cramps.

"We alternated at winning but I had an advantage today because he had just had an operation," said three-time leg winner Reli of his friend Montecillo, a two-time winner here who had an appendectomy late last year and had resumed training only two months ago.

The 24-year-old Reli, an enlisted member of the Philippine Army, clocked one hour, seven minutes and 14 seconds, beating Montecillo by 48 seconds.

Jopel Penales, also a former leg winner, placed third in 1:08:48.

The 21-year-old Sevilleno, an education student at the University of Cebu, timed 1:26:11.

Aerobics instructor Leszl Gitaruelas placed second in 1:30:42, just ahead of Sharon Vega of the University of Visayas (1:30:57).

Cebu City Mayor Tommy Osmeña sent off the record 17,854 runners in this event held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, adidas, Globe Handyphone, Cebu Pacific and the Department of Tourism.

The top three finishers in the men and women's 21-K run advanced to the National Finals slated Nov. 14 in Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, the top three finishers in the 5-K fun run were Joseph Codino (18:38), Mendel Lopez (18:45) and Gilbert Duterte (19:04) in the men's division and Jade Marie Recto (21:43), Joeyry Anne Lee (23:24), and Mary Rose Arman (23:23) in the distaff side.

Weigh-in for title foes up

THE WEIGH-IN for the WBO Asia Pacific bantamweight championship between Rey "Boom Boom" Bautista and Thailand's Saensak Singmanassak is set at 11:30 a.m. today at the Cebu Grand Hotel.

Overseeing today's procedure is WBO Asia Pacific representative Leon Panoncillo, as well as representatives of the Games and Amusements Board in Cebu.

Also joining the weigh-in are Boy Ceasar Amonsot who, like Bautista, is from the ALA Stable, and his opponent, Arnel Porras. The two fighters will dispute the Philippine Boxing Federation featherweight title. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

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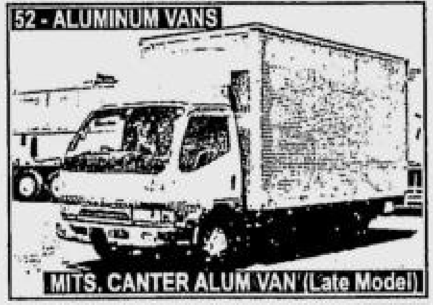

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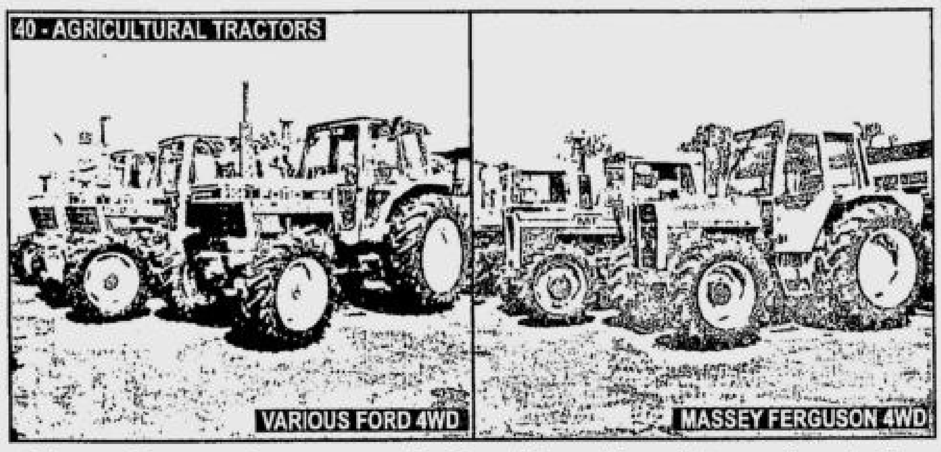

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AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ATENEO'S Cliff Arao battles UST's Franciz Allera and Allan Evangelista for the rebound.

Eagles bounce back; Maroons stop Warriors

By Jasmine W. Payo

NOTHING fuels anger more than a bitter loss.

The Ateneo Eagles, their seven-game winning streak snapped recently by the University of the East Warriors, vented their ire on the University of Santo Tomas Tigers with a 77-62 rout yesterday in the 67th UAAP varsity basketball tournament at the Philsports Arena.

"After our game against UE, we wanted to make up for it and get our focus back. Nobody stepped up then, so we challenged the players and they delivered. Everyone did their roles this time," said Ateneo coach Sandy Arespacochaga.

GAMES THURSDAY *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
11:30 a.m.—La Salle vs NU (Jrs)
1:30 p.m.—La Salle vs NU (Srs)
*4 p.m.—FEU vs Adamson (Srs)
*Live on Studio 23

Earlier, Toti Almeda led the University of the Philippines with a 16-point performance as the Maroons handed the surging UE Warriors a reality check with a 65-57.

Ateneo improved its leading slate to 8-1, while UE stayed in solo third with a 5-4 card. UST dropped into a tie with Adamson and La Salle at fourth with 4-4 records, while UP stood at 3-6.

Four Eagles combined for 46 points with veterans Magnum Membrere and Badjie del Rosario finishing with 13 apiece.

After LA Tenorio, JC Intal and Paolo Bugia teamed up for a 39-28 Ateneo halftime lead, Membrere opened the third period with eight consecutive points for a 17-point advantage, 47-30.

Del Rosario later on sparked an 11-0 charge as the lead ballooned to 25 points, 58-33.

The Junior Maroons also nipped the Pages, 74-68, to keep solo second with a 6-2 record.

The scores:

Second game (Srs)

UP 65—Almeda 16, Cruz 10, Cervantes 8, Santos 7, David 6, Epres 6, Ibañes 6, Ferrer 5, Buyco 1, Bienvenida 0, Quebral 0, Penzon 0.

UE 57—Arellano 18, Masbang 11, Labagala 10, Hubalde 7, Palaganas 6, Canaleta 4, Saguindel 1, Tabaquero 0, Dizon 0, Napo 0, Pradas 0, Acuna 0.

Quarters: 21-17, 30-30, 50-40, 65-57.

Third game (Srs)

ATENEO 77—Membrere 13, Del Rosario 13, Bugia 10, Intal 10, Tenorio 9, Kramer 8, Escalona 5, Aguilar 4, Tiu 2, Arao 2, Ulchico 1, Nkemakolam 0, Quimson 0, Escueta 0.

UST 62—Cortez 12, Vizcarra 11, Luanzon 9, Pribhdas 7, Manching 6, Dizon 6, De Guman 6, Espiritu 2, Allera 2, Duncil 1, Villanueva 0, Sualinog 0, Evangelista 0, Cuan 0.

Quarters: 17-14, 39-28, 60-38, 77-62.

Phelps claims first gold

Sets Games' titanic swim battle: 200-m free vs Thorpe

ATHENS—Michael Phelps made the perfect start to his bid to win a record eight gold medals at the Athens Olympics when he broke his own world record to win the 400 meters individual medley on Saturday.

Australia's Ian Thorpe, the swimming star of the Sydney Olympics, also got off to a flying start in Athens when he successfully defended his 400 freestyle title after a titanic struggle with Grant Hackett.

Thorpe also posted the fastest time in the 200-m freestyle heats Sunday, while rivals Van Den Hoogenband and Phelps also advanced to the semifinals.

The Aussie world record holder clocked 1:47.22, one tenth of a second faster than Holland's Van Den Hoogenband, who won the race in Sydney in 2000.

The 200 free final Monday night will pit some of swimming's biggest stars against each other, including the only individual Olympic matchup between Phelps and Thorpe.

As Van Den Hoogenband made his way past reporters, he was asked: "Is this the greatest race?"

"Ever," he replied, smiling.

Australia won a second gold medal on the opening night of swimming with a world record in the women's 4x100 freestyle relay, while Ukraine's Yana Klochkova became the first woman to win back-to-back 400 individual medley titles.

Phelps lived up to all the hype that has surrounded him since he announced he would try and better Mark Spitz's seven gold medals from the Munich Games.

The 19-year-old pulled away from his rivals to win the gold in four minutes 08.26 seconds and shave 0.15 seconds off the previous mark of 4:08.41 which he set in California last month.

Erik Vendt finished second in 4:11.81 to complete a US one-two while Hungary's Laszlo Cseh took the bronze in 4:12.15 but neither was able to mount a serious challenge to Phelps.

"I've got one event down and six to go so I'm a little less nervous. I've got one off my shoulders," said Phelps, whose swimming is better than his maths.

Thorpe won the 400 freestyle in 3:43.10 in a close finish from Hackett (3:43.36) and American Klete Keller (3:44.11) to join fellow Australian Murray Rose (1956 and 1960) as the only men to win back-to-back 400 freestyle Olympic golds.

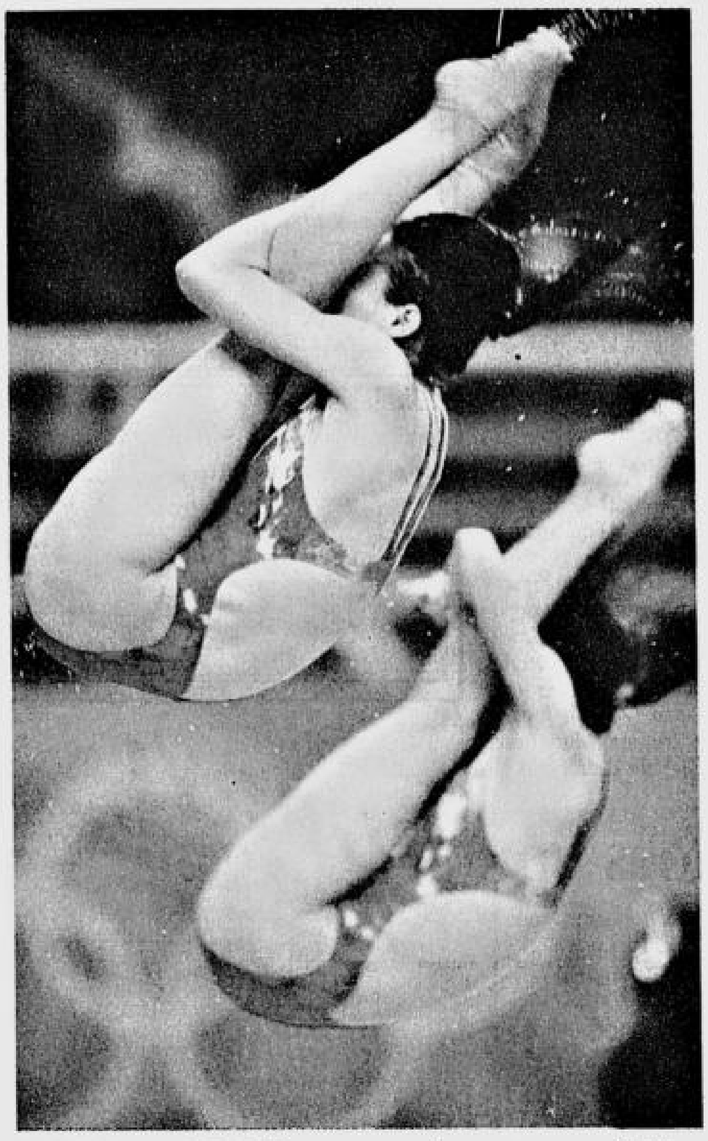
Thorpe, who won three gold medals in Sydney as a 17-year-old, has not lost a 400 freestyle race in seven years but was disqualified for a false start at the Australian trials and only defended his title after Craig Stevens stepped down.

"I had a wonderful opportunity to swim this race because one of my best friends chose to give me this opportunity and I'm very grateful for that," Thorpe said. *Reuters*

Big debut by Venus

ATHENS—Defending champion Venus Williams, who had not played since spraining her wrist three weeks ago, swept Melinda Czink of Hungary in 57 minutes to open the Olympic tennis tournament on Sunday.

Williams, who has slipped to 12th in the world since winning the US Open (2000) and Wimbledon (2001), won 6-1, 6-2. *AFP*



JINGJIN Guo and Minxia Wu are grace and symmetry personified in the Athens Olympics. The Chinese pair went on to win the women's three meters synchronized gold. AFP

Luneta eyed for SEAG opening rites

By Jong Arcano

PICTURE this unique scenario: With the famous Manila Bay sunset as the perfect backdrop, thousands of athletes and officials march past the monument of Dr. Jose Rizal at the Luneta and then assemble in front of the Quirino Grandstand.

This, of course, is not for an ordinary purpose.

Sportsman Peping Cojuangco broached the idea of staging the opening ceremonies of next year's Southeast Asian Games at the Rizal Park during a recent meeting among key figures who will provide President Arroyo with crucial inputs on how to efficiently run the meet.

Aside from its historical significance, the Rizal Park scenario was considered for cost-cutting purposes since holding the kickoff rites there would no longer require a large-scale renovation of the decaying Rizal Memorial Stadium.

It was in the same meeting of the Philippine SEAG organizing committee (Philsoc), Philippine Sports Commission and Malacañang officials where the plan to replace the tarsier with the Philippine Eagle as the official mascot was unveiled.

A cross-section of the sports community has been put to task by the President to find ways on how to trim down a whopping budget proposal of no less than P400 million for the SEA Games set in December next year.

Since the renovation of the main venue will eat up a huge portion of the outlay, no one raised any objection to the Rizal Park idea.

"At this point in time when the priority is to drastically reduce the budget, everybody felt an idea like that (Rizal Park) is most welcome," said the INQUIRER source. "It will also put a lot of pressure on the national sports association to come up with justifiable proposals."

The Rizal Park has been the site of many historic events, including proclamations of presidents, visits by heads of state and Papal visits.

Greek track pair sacked over doping charges

ATHENS—Olympic 200 meters champion Costas Kenteris and women's 100-m silver medalist Katerina Thanou were suspended from the Greek team at the Athens Games on Saturday pending an IOC hearing into missed drugs tests.

The decision by a divided Greek Olympic Committee (HOC), after hours of argument behind closed doors, put the onus of ordering an outright ban back onto the International Olympic Committee, which will hear the pair's explanations on Monday.

The suspension also applies to the athletes' coach Christos Tzekos, who has fallen foul of Greek athletics chiefs before.

Both runners remained in hospital after a mysterious motorcycle accident hours after the scandal broke on the eve of the Games.

The Greek officials took four hours to reach a decision, split five votes to one: "Exchanges were extremely heated," HOC head Lambis Nikolaou said. "In my opinion they should have been expeled from the team right now." Tzekos, however, was unrepentant: "We have done everything by the book. We have nothing to be afraid of and I would like to thank everyone who supports us," he told reporters. *Reuters*

BEACH volleyball competitions in the Athens Olympics start with Holly McPeak of the US going for a dig against Norway. AP

O'Hara scores breakthrough F3 win amid rain

BEIJING—John O'Hara of Ireland took advantage of wet conditions to nail his first F3 career victory Sunday in the third leg of the Denso Iridium Power Asian Formula 3 championships at the Goldenport circuit here.

Christian Jones of Australia suffered his first loss in five races this season and settled for second place. Former champion Mark Goddard of England took third spot.

Defending titlist Pepon Marave of the Philippines crossed the finish for the first time this season, coming in fourth followed by brothers Enzo and Don Pastor of Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Tom's, and Richard Joson of Denso Hanjin JF3 in that order.

The first of two races scheduled for the day was held under a slight drizzle, making the track wet and slippery.

O'Hara, Jones and Goddard were fortunate to avoid an early mishap that involved Enzo Pastor, compatriot Roland Hermoso of Speedtech Asia and Chinese driver Mars Hsieh of Castrol Team Goodard-Minardi Asia.

"Goddard broke hard, I had to release my foot off the accelerator to avoid hitting him. Then I spun. The next thing I knew, my car got hit by Hermoso and Hsieh," said Pastor.

Like in the previous four races, O'Hara and Jones turned the Beijing stop into a two-horse race.

O'Hara capitalized on Jones' early mistake in the back straight to seize control and secure the victory with a time of 22:22.968.

"I went in determined to win the race," said the 22-year-old Formula Ireland champion.

An Olympics without politics? Forget it!

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

SPORTS and politics have always been sharing the spotlight in the Olympic Games.

"At the Games," wrote Richard Benedetto of USA Today, "sport and politics are running mates." An Olympics without politics has been about as rare as an Olympics without broken records and broken hearts, he said.

United States President Theodore Roosevelt offended Chicago by siding with St. Louis as site for the 1904 Summer Games where pygmies and Sioux athletes took part in events long gone from the Olympic roster, including pole climbing, mud fighting and stone throwing.

In the 1908 London Olympics, the Russians tried to prevent the Finns from flying the Finnish flag and the British did the same to the Irish. The Games were supposed to be held in Rome but was moved to London following the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

World War I and World War II canceled the Olympics in 1916, 1940 and 1944. Japan was not given the opportunity to host the Games in 1940 after it invaded China while Germany was not invited to take part in the 1920 Antwerp Olympics as punishment for its role in World War I. Japan and Germany were also banned from the 1948 Games in London, where athletes from Soviet-bloc nations defected to the West, the first in a series of defections that continued throughout the Cold War and continues to this day.

The Cold War competition has become so fierce between the US and the Soviet Union until the 1980s that the two superpowers engaged in tit-for-tat boycotts of the Games.

In 1980, US President Jimmy Carter, angered by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, led a US boycott of the Moscow Olympics in 1980.

In retaliation, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev led a boycott of the 1984 Los Angeles Games, saying that their action was mainly about the "security" of Soviet athletes.

There were other boycotts of the Olympic Games, including:

- China's refusal to participate in the 1956 Games in Melbourne because the International Olympic Committee recognized Taiwan as China.
- Also in 1956, Iraq, Egypt and Lebanon did not compete to protest the Israeli-led takeover of the Suez Canal, while Spain, Holland and Switzerland refused to take part, protesting the Soviet invasion of Hungary.
- A total of 22 African nations boycotted the 1976 Montreal Olympics because New Zealand's national rugby team had played against South Africa, which was supposedly banned from international competitions because of its apartheid policies. South Africa was banned by the IOC after the 1960 Games in Rome and only permitted to return in 1992 when its apartheid policies ended.
- In the 1968 Mexico Olympics, two black US track and field medal winners, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, took the podium without shoes and gave the Black Power salute as the American national anthem was being played, protesting racism in America.

***

OLYMPIC NOTES. Great Britain won the unofficial medal race at the 1908 London Olympic Games... The first Asian city to host the Olympics was Tokyo in 1964... Women athletes made their Olympic debut at the 1900 Paris Games, competing in tennis. On the other hand, swimming for women was included in the Olympic calendar for the first time at the Stockholm Games in 1912... The modern Olympic Games were canceled in 1916 due to World War I and in 1940 and 1944 due to WWII... The Philippines has competed in 17 Olympics since 1924, winning a total of nine medals (two silvers and seven bronzes)... Swimmer Teofilo Yldefonso, a former Philippine Scout, became the first Filipino to win an Olympic medal, a bronze, and the only back-to-back Filipino Olympic medal winner. He bagged the bronze in the 200-meter breaststroke at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics and repeated the feat at the 1932 Games in Los Angeles. He was, for many years, the most dominant swimmer in the Far Eastern Games, forerunner of the Asian Games... Boxer Jose "Cely" Villanueva, father of 1964 Tokyo Olympics boxing silver medalist Anthony Villanueva, was the first Filipino Olympic medal winner in boxing, winning a bronze in the bantamweight division at the 1932 Los Angeles Games... Hurdles specialist Miguel White won the first Olympic track and field medal for the Philippines, a bronze, in the 400-meter hurdles at the 1936 Berlin Games.

Barrera wants Pacquiao, not Morales

MEXICAN Marco Antonio Barrera, the former pound-for-pound featherweight king, would rather settle an old score with Filipino Manny Pacquiao than face Erik Morales for the third time.

PACQUIAO PDI PHOTO

This was revealed yesterday by Pacquiao's American promoter, Murad Muhammad, who told boxing website Boxingtalk that "based on his discussions with Golden Boy Promotions CEO Richard Schaeffer, he believes Barrera is leaning toward a Pacquiao rematch over a third fight with fellow Mexican legend Erik Morales."

Muhammad, who steered the US campaign that saw Pacquiao win the IBF superbantam crown before stopping Barrera last November in San Antonio, Texas, intimated that the date being considered for the rematch is Nov. 27 on an HBO pay-per-view.

Muhammad is expected to announce the purse as well as the venue of the fight after a thorough discussion with Schaeffer.

Reports have also pointed to the Mandalay Bay Resort Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas as the front-runner among possible sites for the rematch since its executive, reportedly with Filipino roots, had expressed interest in holding the event.

San Francisco and Los Angeles are also possible venues for the proposed rematch owing to the big Filipino and Mexican population in those areas.

Barrera remains Pacquiao's biggest conquest so far, stopping the Mexican in 11 rounds. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

PGA CHAMPIONSHIP

Singh grabs hairline lead

KOHLER, Wisconsin—Vijay Singh took a one-shot lead in the US PGA Championship third round on Saturday after his playing partner, Justin Leonard, stumbled with a bogey at the last.

Fijian Singh, chasing his first major title since the 2000 US Masters, fired a three-under-par 69 to finish on 12-under 204 at a sun-drenched Whistling Straits.

American Leonard, co-leader with Singh overnight, had to settle for a 70 and second place after finding a greenside bunker with his approach at the 500-yard 18th.

"It was a lot harder than it looked today, and I didn't play as well as yesterday," said Singh, the hottest player in the game over the last 13 months with six victories on the US PGA Tour.

"Thank God for that little putter of mine, it kept me in play. I guess that's what it takes," he told reporters.

The 41-year-old switched back to a conventional blade from a belly putter two weeks ago, going on to win the Buick Open in his next start.

US Masters champion Phil Mickelson, a top-three finisher in the first three majors of the year, equaled the low round of the day with a sparkling five-under 67, tying for third at eight-under 208.

Level with Mickelson were fellow American Chris Riley (69), South African Ernie Els (72), Canada's Stephen Ames (69) and Briton Darren Clarke (72).

Another American, Chris DiMarco, was alone in eighth at seven under after returning a 71.

Perfect conditions

With scoring conditions near perfect on a third successive day of relative calm on the shores of Lake Michigan, Singh and Leonard bounced back from early bogeys to stay in the hunt for the final major of the year.

Singh, the 1998 champion at Sahalee, reeled off birdies on six, 10, 13 and 16 while 1997 British Open winner Leonard picked up shots on five, six, 10, 12 and 16.

The pair was on track to safely negotiate the tough four finishing holes before Leonard's blemish at the last put Singh clear on what is traditionally known as 'moving day' in major championships.

"Those last four did play very difficult today," said Leonard. "On 18, I almost hit a great shot out of the bunker, but it came up short. I then had a nice two-putt from 35 feet.

Storming start

At one point, it seemed Mickelson would finish closer to the lead but the world No. 4 failed to sustain a storming start after the turn.

Among the day's early starters, world No. 1 Tiger Woods also failed to make the most of a red-hot opening nine. He had to settle for a three-under 69 and a 54-hole total of three-under 213, nine strokes off the pace in a tie for 25th.

Woods, desperate to make up ground on the leaders after battling to make the halfway cut by a shot, birdied four of the first nine holes to get to three under. *Reuters*

VIJAY Singh reacts after a birdie putt. REUTERS

Gasol dwarfs Yao as Spain humbles China

ATHENS—China's towering basketball superstar Yao Ming came up short here Sunday in his battle with fellow National Basketball Association star Pau Gasol, who led Spain to a convincing opening-day victory in the Olympic Games men's basketball.

The eagerly awaited clash of Yao, the Houston Rockets' center, and Gasol, a key part of the Memphis Grizzlies, ended in an 83-58 victory for the fast-breaking Spanish in the Group A match.

The 7-1 Gasol top-scored with 21 points while Yao, 7-6, had 12 as the fluid Spaniards outwitted the static Chinese.

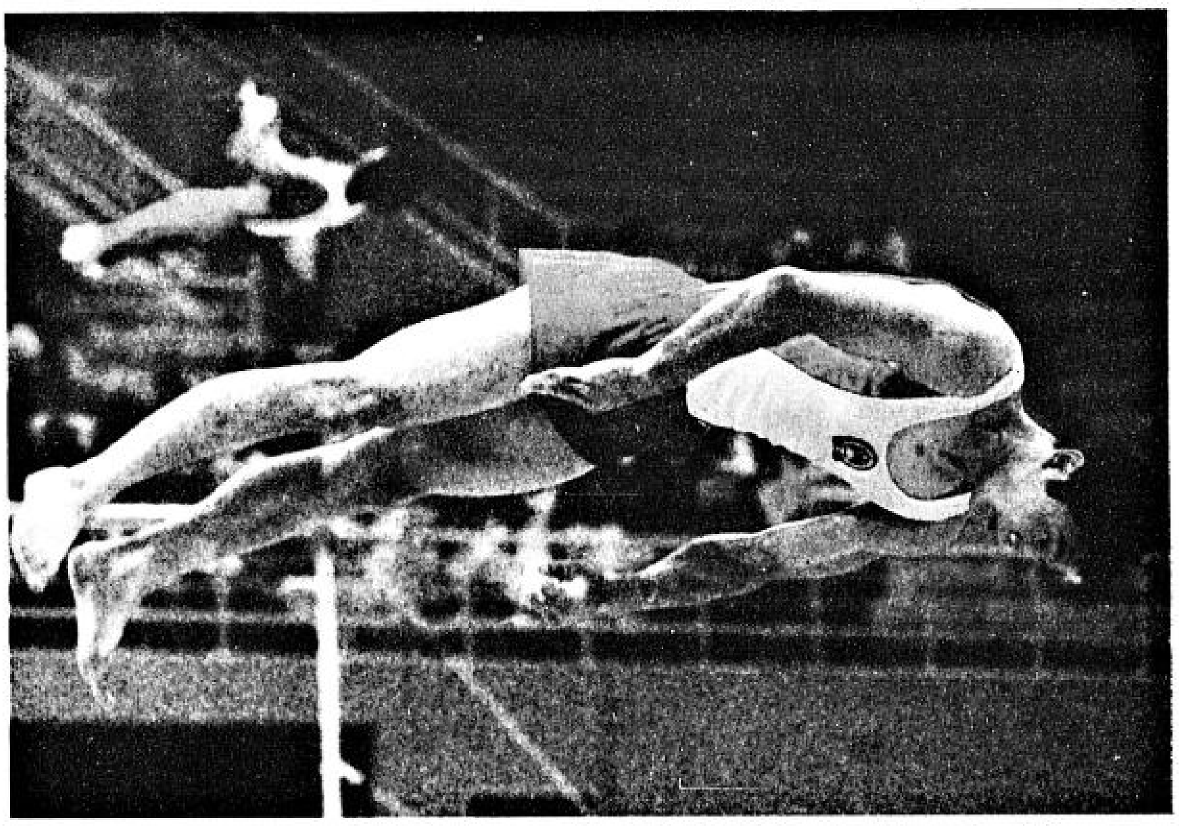
The 2002 NBA Rookie of the Year provided the defining moment of his battle with Yao when he dunked over the Chinese giant in the second quarter, earning a foul shot in the process.

In other games, Italy held off New Zealand, 71-69, while Lithuania beat Angola, 78-73.

Meanwhile, the last time the United States played Puerto Rico in a game that meant something, a pushing and shoving match broke out and fans tossed drinks and debris onto the court.

That happened last summer in a semifinal match at the Tournament of the Americas, one of five games the teams have played against each other since July 2003.

The teams will play again Sunday night in one of six opening-round games on the first day of competition in men's basketball. Serbia-Montenegro also plays Argentina in a rematch of the gold medal game at the 2002 World Championships in Indianapolis. *AFP*


CHINESE gymnast Xing Aowei seems like he is levitating as he performs a routine during the men's artistic gymnastics qualifying session at the Athens Olympics. REUTERS

Warriors eye end of skid vs Cardinals

ILOILO CITY—The Iloilo Warriors try to check their skid when they go up against the visiting Baguio Cardinals Monday in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) finals at the University of San Agustin here.

The Warriors, who have lost five straight times since a hot 5-1 start, are looking to avenge an 83-72 loss to the Cardinals last week in Baguio City when the two teams tangle at 6 p.m.

Both squads enter the match fresh from their first homecourt losses, with the Skygo-backed Cebu team ripping the Warriors, 92-80, and the Ozamis Cotta clobbering the Cardinals, 87-80, in the tournament sponsored by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Cebu Ferries, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorcycles, Accel and Molten.

Three-point specialist Eduardo Allado Jr. will not be seeing action for the Warriors of businessman Robert Uy after being slapped a one-game suspension for punching Tribes forward Andy Larong in their previous match.

Apo hosts Samsung Amateur tour's fourth leg

MINDANAO'S top golfers shoot for berths to the national grand finals when they .compete in the fourth leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the challenging Apo Golf and Country Club in Davao City on Aug. 19-22.

Ex-national players Jay Bayron and Boyet Zaragosa and Louie Dakudao, the former RP amateur finalist who helped Del Monte achieve a historic win in the Philippine Airlines Interclub, will headline the roster disputing the championship division over 72 holes starting Thursday at the tough par-72 layout.

They will try to join the first three winners—Raymund Sangil (Sta. Elena), Korean expat Kim Chang-Hoi (Southwoods) and Juvic Pagunsan (Pueblo de Oro in Cagayan)—in the culmination of the Tour next year.

Aside from the 72-hole championship battle, there will be 36-hole competitions in men's Class A, Class B, Class C and Class D and the ladies' Class A, Class B and Class C.

Trophies and appliances will go to the top finishers of the tourney also sponsored by Tokyo Tokyo, Gatorade, adidas Taylor Made, KZG by Custom Clubmakers, Pink Patio Boracay, Coppertone Sport, Rogin-E, and Philippine Airlines as the official carrier. Killer-Bee, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and 103.5 K-Lite are media partners.

Boy Blue Ocampo, president of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group, announced several changes in dates for the remaining legs of the course-hopping circuit.

From Davao, the Samsung Tour goes to Mt. Malarayat for the fifth leg on Sept. 27-30, then to Club John Hay in Baguio on Oct. 12-15 then the eliminations wind up at the Cebu Country Club on Dec. 14-17.

The national finals is set on Jan. 21-24 with the venue to be announced soon.

For inquiries, call 6350010.

Golfers from various clubs in Davao, like the Rancho Palos Verdes and the Davao City GC, including those from Pueblo de Oro in Cagayan de Oro and Del Monte in Bukidnon are also expected to vie for spots.

DOWN AND OUT
GREEK boxer Georgios Gazis tumbles out of the ring on the way to losing to Azerbaijan's Javid Taghiyev in a middleweight match in the Athens Olympics. REUTERS

Davao gals blast Baguio XI

DAVAO unloaded a barrage of goals to rout Baguio, 16-0, while Negros Occidental and Mindoro Oriental scuttled their rivals yesterday at the start of the PFF-Super Ferry National Under-19 Women's Championship at the Marikina City Sports Center.

Karen Pauline and Rose Tan shone with four goals each, while Melody Loloy and Lyca Kristine Dureza added three each for Davao, one of four favored teams in the inaugural girls' tournament organized by the Philippine Football Federation and backed by Mayor Marides C. Fernando and the Marikina City government.

Negros Occidental stunned star-studded Cebu, 2-0, behind goals from Darlene Dizon in the 16th and 65th minutes, while Mindoro Oriental drew three goals from Anabel Limbo in a 5-1 thrashing of Iligan City.

The National Capital Region—another title favorite—and Cagayan de Oro were still playing at presstime in the weeklong event backed by Super Ferry and supported by PFF partners Adidas, Red Ribbon Bakeshop, Petron, Unicef, New Pagcor and Aboitiz Express.

Davao and Negros Occidental collide today in an early battle for leadership at 1:30 p.m. at the Marikina City Sports Center, after the Baguio-Cebu and Iligan-NCR matches at 8 and 10 a.m., respectively. Oriental Mindoro and Cagayan de Oro-Misamis Oriental meet at 3:30 p.m.

Laguna, the other favorite for the crown, debuts against Legaspi-Albay at 10 a.m. at the Marist School field. Masbate and Rizal-Montalban open hostilities on the same pitch at 8 a.m.

UM Hawks run up amazing streak to 60 wins

NOTHING can stop three-time champion University of Manila.

Led by Jovit Gomez and Ryan Regalado, the Hawks won their seventh straight game—and 60th overall since 2001—following a masterful 88-73 win over archrival University of Makati in the Naascu basketball tournament at the UM gym.

Gomez .routed all guards thrown against him, scoring a game-high 27 points to lead the Hawks of coach Loreto Tolentino to their seventh straight win in the nine-team, double-round tournament.

Regalado contributed 15 points, while Edward Vidanes added eight points.

Overall, the Hawks have now won 60 straight games dating back to the league's inception four years ago.

The Hawks can complete an eight-game sweep of the first round of eliminations with a win over Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay on Aug. 17.

James Mangaran carried the fight for the Wizards with 20 points, followed by Gerald Lorica and Marlon Nogarda with 19 points apiece.

In the second game, Centro Escolar University edged Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay, 70-68, in overtime to forge a four-way tie with University of Makati and New Era University with similar 4-3 cards.

The scores

First game

UM 88—Gomez 27, Regalado 15, Vidanes 8, Delostrinos 8, Bernados 7, Santiago 7, Salem 6, Litonjua 4, Uao 4, Ocampo 2, Casipit 0

UNIV. OF MAKATI 71—Mangaran 20, Lorica 19, Nograda 19, Tamaray 6, Domangcas 3, Bangulbang 2, Osman 2, Del Rosario 2, Custodio 0, Barrios 0

Quarters: 26-17, 50-29, 73-49, 88-73

Second game:

CEU 70—Cordero 17, Macasaet 13, Gatdula 13, Salamat 9, F. Romulo 6, Cristobal 4, Manalero 3, Bacsal 2, Carillo 2, Dayag 1, J. Romulo 0,

PLP 68—Asay 14, Gawat 10, Go-Bon 10, David 9, Gumapas 7, Rizos 7, Orcullo 5, De la Cruz 2, Racquel 2, Galimba 2, Nuqui 0, Navo 0, Pascual 0

Quarters: 12-13, 22-29, 37-48, 58-58, 70-68.

Brin brings joy to RP Olympians

From page A26

with her in the final 10 m.

While Pangilinan clipped less than half a second off her personal best, Molina was almost a second off his.

The 19-year-old from University of California-Berkeley also had a good jump in his heat, swimming strong at the start and staying in third place through the 100-m turn. He was still third going into the final 50 until he faded in the final 25 to finish second to last.

He admitted he had not been up to his best so far in his Olympic debut, but he looked forward to doing better in his final two events—the 200-m breaststroke heats on Tuesday and the 200-m individual medley on Wednesday.

"I haven't really been that good, but I expect to do better in the 200 breast and the 200 IM," Molina said.

Dionisio, a relative newcomer in trap shooting after distinguishing himself as a world champion in practical shooting, saw his hopes fade in the wind at the Markopoulo Olympic Shooting Center, 42 km from the Olympic Village.

The wind picked up on the second day of competition and wreaked havoc on the aim of the 32-year-old Dionisio, who qualified for the Olympics as a wild card.

He wound up 32nd and fourth to last in a field of 35. And even if he had been perfect in the final 50 targets of the eliminations, Dionisio still would not have made it to the top 6 for the final-round shootoff.

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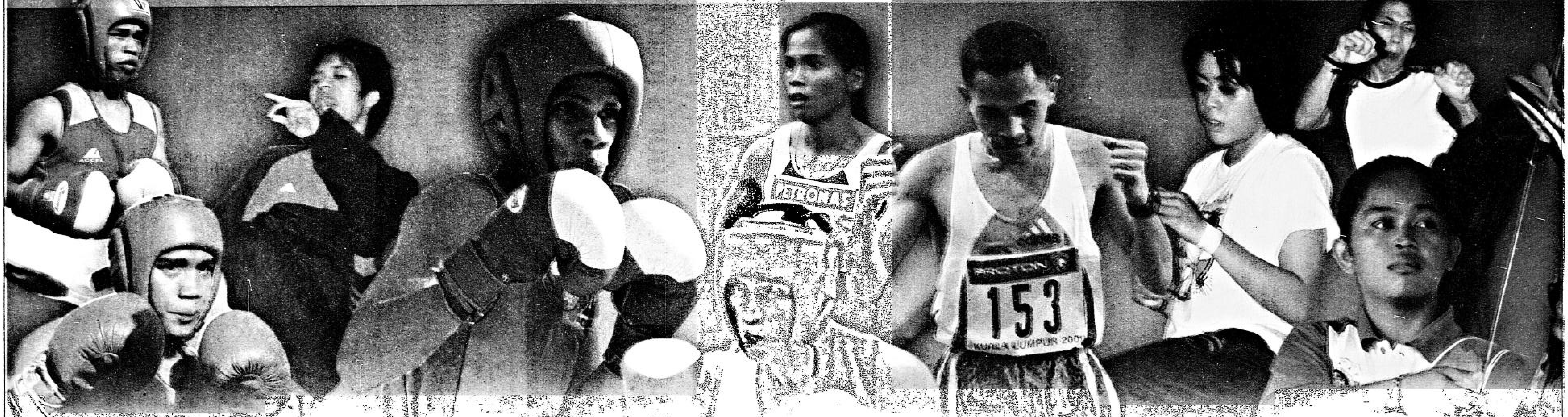

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ATHENS 2004

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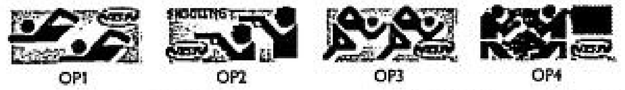
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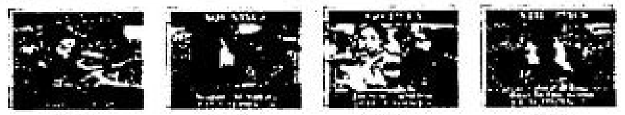
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Finance bucks moratorium on new taxes

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has rejected outright a proposal in Congress to impose a five-year moratorium on the imposition of new taxes, saying such a move would be suicidal for a government facing a serious fiscal crisis.

"It is too much to ask for a ban on new taxes. We cannot solve the budget deficit and our debt problems without the help of new revenue measures," Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan said.

Tan, who is in charge of tax-related matters, said the government understood the public's clamor against new taxes, considering the unprecedented increase in consumer and oil prices. She explained, however, that the government could not help create a better economy for the people if it continued to lack resources.

"This is exactly the reason why we need new taxes. We have to solve the budget deficit to make the economy move forward," Tan said in an interview.

Tan made the reaction after Bulacan Rep. Pedro Pancho, an administration lawmaker, filed a bill opposing the Arroyo administration's move to push for new taxes. Based on the premise that it is the worst time to force the public to spend more, House Bill No. 2286 calls for a five-year ban on the imposition of new taxes.

Legislators have argued that the Bureau of Internal Revenue should instead improve the collection of existing taxes, and plug hundreds of billions in tax leakages, instead of imposing new taxes.

The BIR, however, said flaws in the tax code and the pervasive culture of tax evasion hampered the revenue agency from achieving high collection efficiency. The BIR said that while it had already started programs to increase the collection of existing taxes, new ones were still needed as the impact of its new programs would not be immediate.

The DOF, the head agency of the BIR, said improving collection of existing taxes would not be enough to solve the budget deficit as scheduled. The imposition of new taxes was necessary, it added.

The government is pushing for the passage of eight revenue-raising measures to help gradually reduce the burgeoning budget deficit and totally wipe it out by the end of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term in 2010.

The measures include a P2-a-liter increase in petroleum taxes, the indexation to inflation of the excise tax on alcohol and cigarettes, a franchise tax on telecommunication firms, the shift from net to gross income tax, an increase in the value-added tax rate, the adoption of a performance-based system of evaluation among government agencies, a tax

FINANCE/ B5

Time running out in averting power crisis

By Abigail L. Ho

(First of a series)

THE SWELTERING heat is making your mind stray to thoughts of ice cream or a cold drink instead of on your work at hand. The cursor blinks back at you as you stare at your monitor, unable to work. But you're lucky to even have a computer running. It is all that the building generator can handle at this point, after almost eight straight hours of a power outage.

SPECIAL REPORT

Welcome back to the early '90s—when brownouts were the rage (literally and figuratively) and daylight saving time seemed like one of the best ideas to hit Philippine shores. But this is no "Back to the Future" installment. This could be the country's future, three or four years down the line.

For some months now, talks of a looming power crisis have hounded the headlines or at least have occupied some space in the news. The possibility of something like the 1990s' dark ages coming back to haunt the country has also been a subject of discussion among members of the power sector—whether or not they believe that a crisis will actually take place.

Even the Department of Energy, in its 10-year Philippine Energy Plan, acknowledged that a shortfall would occur in Luzon and the Visayas by 2008 and in Mindanao by 2005 if no adequate capacity additions would be made.

But as early as now, the specter of a power

TIME/ B2

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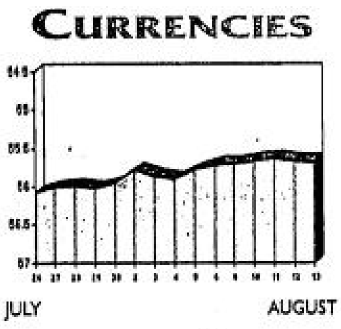

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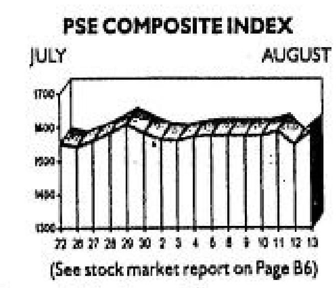


(See stock market report on Page B6)

Sluggish trading seen

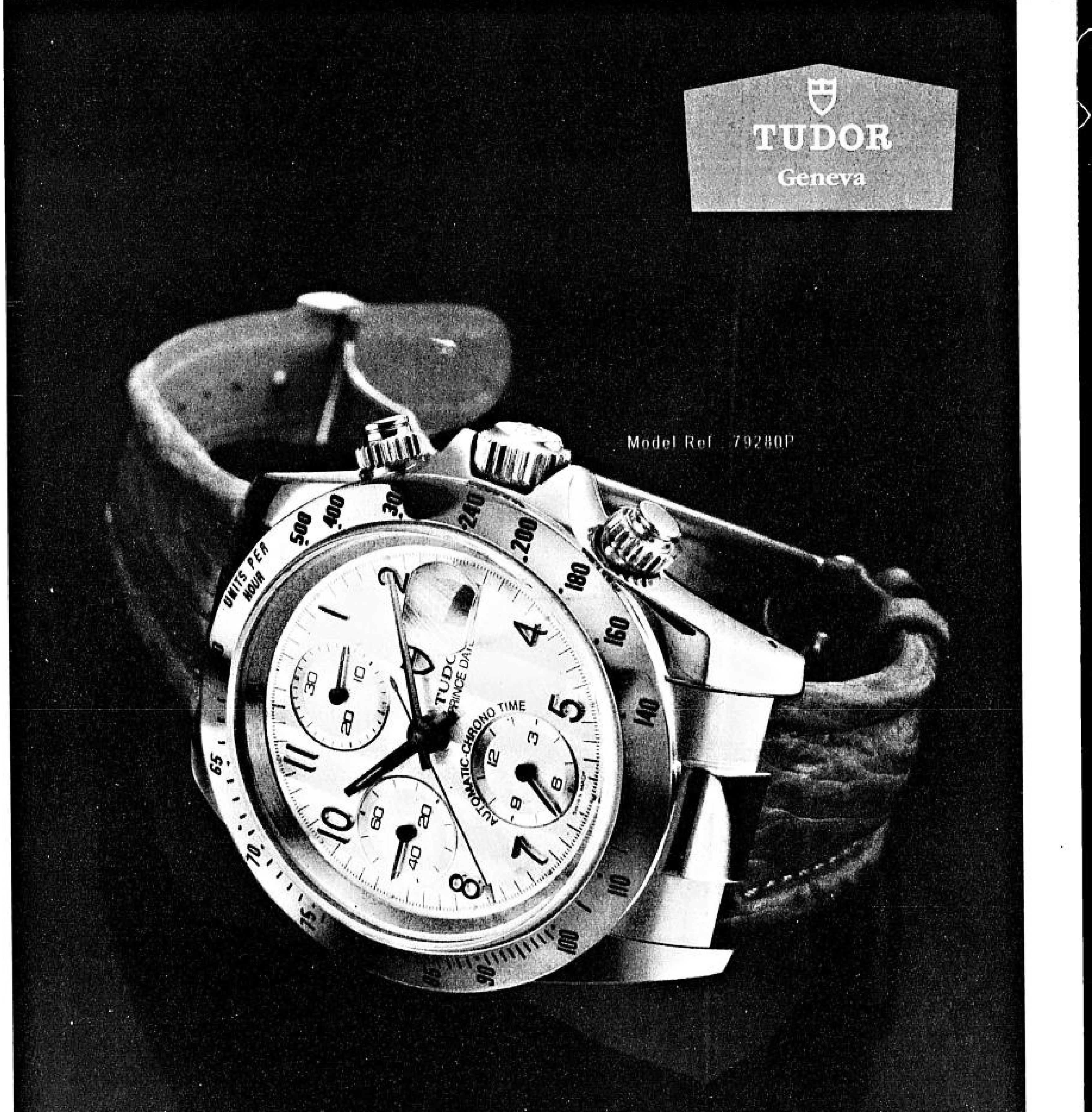
MARKET players are expected to slow down on purchases this week after scooping up bargain stocks last week.

"Investors have shifted their focus back on the earnings performance of companies," BPI Trade said in its weekly report.

Encouraged by bargain prices, active buying lifted the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) by 14 points or 0.9 percent to 1,590.63 last week.

"Another sideways trading session could ensue early this week, as portfolio fund

SLUGGISH/ B6



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Time running out in averting power crisis

From page B1

shortage is making life miserable for Visayas and Mindanao residents as rotating brownouts in some parts of the two main power grids are already happening.

Data from the National Power Corp. indicate that the supply-demand gap in Luzon will narrow year after year, starting with a net reserve of 2,778 megawatts (MW) in 2003. This will then shrink all the way down to 167 MW by 2007, by no means a sufficient amount of reserve for Luzon folk to be assured of stable energy supply.

Demand will start outstripping supply in the country's largest load center by 2008, with a projected capacity shortage of 581 MW.

Far from hopeless

But the government believes that the country can still escape the dark ages, given the proper mix of solutions and cooperation among all stakeholders.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez,. while acknowledging the fact that current electricity demand is eating up present supply and narrowing the gap between the two, says there is still time to do what should be done to prevent a return to the dark ages of the late '80s and early '90s.

But even with still some luxury of time, he says there is no better time than now to institute some real reforms in the sector. These "structural" changes will not only make the power sector more efficient, but will also attract investors to infuse new investments for additional capacity.

"We believe that the sooner we move, the more options we have. Let's not wait for the last minute to react," he says.

One such reform has to do with the current generation rates of National Power Corp. (Napocor). The state firm has been charging its customers very low rates despite the escalating costs of the factors that are considered in power production—fuel and foreign exchange costs.

Since 1995, Napocor's rates have not changed that much. Its average nationwide generation charge in 1995 at P1.80 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) is not so far from the current average of P2.16 per kWh. This is considering the fact that the peso has more than halved in value from that time until now. The cost of fuel and coal has likewise risen over those past nine years.

Also, the state-run power firm has been selling electricity below cost since 2002.

In 2002, Napocor was charging its customers an average of P2.97 per kWh. However, its actual power generation cost was pegged at P3.37 per kWh. The following year saw the state firm charging even less for its electricity at only P2:09 per kWh, way below the actual cost of P3.64 per kWh.

A cap of 40 centavos per kWh on Napocor's purchased power cost adjustment (PPCA) imposed in 2002 by President Macapagal-Arroyo during her Labor Day speech only served to further increase the state firm's subsidy on the electricity it sold.

Instead of moving closer to the true costs of power generation, its rates reflected the government's effort to satisfy the populace. This then led to even more losses for the power firm, rising to a whopping P113.23 billion in 2003.

Napocor data indicate that the state power firm will continue to incur losses up to 2007.

As painful as another power rate hike may be for consumers, Napocor president Rogelio Murga says this is necessary to prevent a comeback of the chronic brownout situation of the early '90s.

Rate hike a must

"We want to make the rates competitive with respect to costs so we can ensure continuing investment in the construction of plants. We don't want to experience what happened in 1991, 1992 and 1993," he says.

Napocor in June 22 filed a rate hike application with the Energy Regulatory Commission. The petition called for a change in the way the state firm charged its customers for the electricity they consumed.

Upon approval by the ERC, current rates for customers in the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao grids will double. This will then allow Napocor to achieve a return on rate base (RORB), a measure of profitability, of 8 percent.

For those in Luzon, rates will go up to P4.56 per kWh from the current P2.57 per kWh (including foreign exchange adjustment). Those in the Visayas will have to pay P4.59 per kWh from P2.82 per kWh, while customers in Mindanao will have to shell out P3.13 per kWh from the existing P1.80 per kWh.

Not only will the state-run power firm achieve an RORB of 8 percent with these new rates. If approved, these higher rates will also give Napocor a positive operating income, something that the firm has not seen since 2001.

Right now, Napocor has an RORB of negative 1.77.

Murga believes that with an attractive rate base, investors will be more keen on investing in the power sector. This will then help avert the projected power crisis in 2008.

Blackmail

But militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) sees Napocor's pronouncements that a rate hike is necessary to prevent a power crisis as nothing short of blackmail.

"The looming power crisis has always been some sort of sword of Damocles foisted upon consumers every time there is a need to raise power rates or privatize the power sector," Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr. says. "It has been used by (Manila Electric Co.) and Napocor to justify rate hikes in the past."

The present need for a rate increase has less to do with averting a power crisis and more to do with helping the state firm recover from its sorry state, he says.

But Napocor's bad financial state, he says, is not the Filipino people's fault. Why should they then be the ones to suffer now?

(To be continued)

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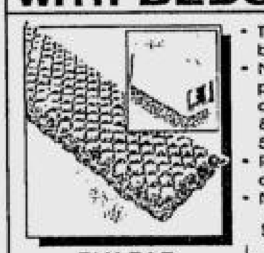

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ASPHALT VS CONCRETE

₱1.4-B Edsa rehab plan to get new lease on life

By Michelle V. Remo

THE P1.4-BILLION Edsa rehabilitation project, which is up for cancellation, may be given another chance.

The Department of Finance has decided to put on hold the planned cancellation of Edsa's rehabilitation after the concerned government agencies agreed to discuss their differences.

"We were advised that discussions are ongoing," Roberto Tan, finance assistant secretary, told reporters over the weekend. "Maybe the problems can be addressed and the project still pursued."

The Edsa rehabilitation, a project approved and funded by the Asian Development Bank, was stalled when the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) objected to the use of asphalt in improving the highway. Preferring the use of concrete, the MMDA locked horns with the Department of Public Works and Highways over the use of asphalt.

Under the ADB project loan, asphalt was the material of choice to be used in the Edsa rehabilitation.

The Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) of the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda)—the body that approves or rejects projects to be funded by official development assistance—earlier gave its go signal for the DOF to cancel the project.

The DOF, which handles the government's financial concerns, is the one directly negotiating with lenders, in this case, the ADB.

"The DOF has not yet communicated (its intention to cancel the project) with the ADB," Tan said. Of course, the ADB wants to know what is happening."

Tan said the Neda agreed to put on hold the planned cancellation of the project after the MMDA and the DPWH agreed to discuss their differences. Once the two agencies agree on what material to use, the rehabilitation project will push through.

Should the rehabilitation plan be canceled, the government would ask the ADB to channel the funds to other projects.

Tan said the projects would also be in line with the objectives of the Metro Manila Air Quality Improvement Sector Development Program of the ADB.

The Edsa rehabilitation project is a component of the ADB's Metro Manila Air Quality Improvement Sector Development Program.

The program aims to address the deteriorating air quality in Metro Manila through the so-called three-year Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

The AQAP means to: mitigate air pollution from mobile sources; ease air pollution from stationary sources; improve fuel quality; reduce emissions from vehicular use; reduce traffic congestion and improve traffic flow; strengthen ambient air quality monitoring, evaluation, and reporting; intensify public awareness of issues relating to air quality, and; strengthen the capacity of concerned institutions.

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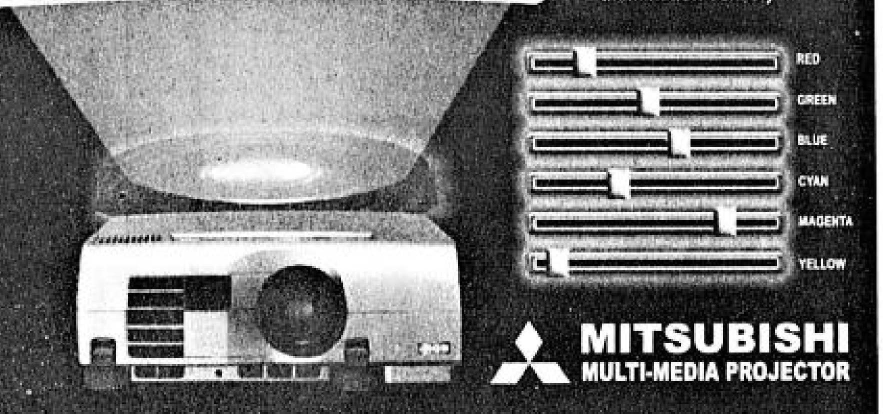

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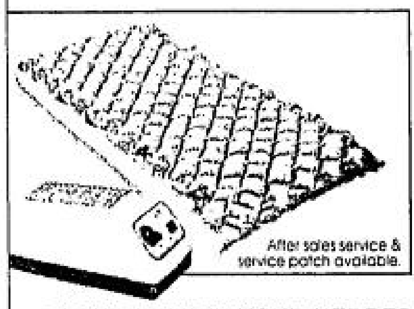

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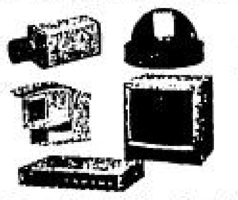

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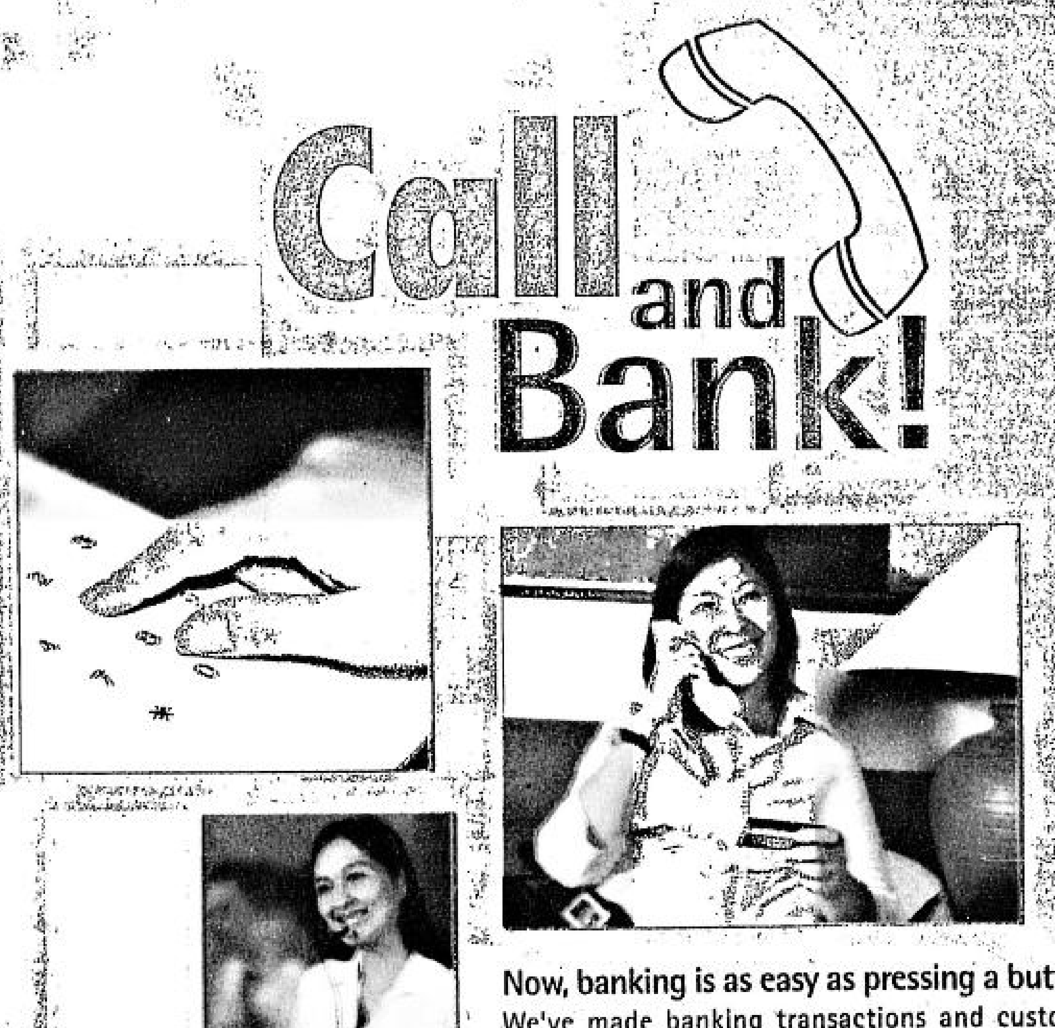
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Oil industry re-regulation?

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Cielito F. Habito

I FIND it hard to understand how some people publicly profess distrust for the government and criticize it no end for not being able to do anything right, and yet at the next breath appear to profess such great faith in it by advocating that certain industries be either taken over or regulated by the same supposedly incompetent, untrustworthy government.

The infamous OPSF

Amid the recent spate of oil price increases, calls for a return to oil industry regulation are coming from different directions. I'm not too surprised hearing it from those who are too young to remember how it was back then when the industry had been regulated. But when the idea is espoused by people who had been very much around and very conscious of the state of affairs at the time, I begin to wonder whether it is mere shortness of memory or something else that leads them to advocate an idea that had clearly not worked well for us.

Those who are espousing a return to oil industry regulation are now proposing for the establishment of an Oil Price Stabilization Fund (OPSF) as if it was the newest bright idea for dealing with the oil price increases. And yet it was the infamous OPSF that was in fact the centerpiece of the failed price regulation policy back then. For the headaches it gave us economic managers at that time, we had felt it more apt to call it the Oil Price Destabilization Fund, or alternately, the Oil Price Stabilization Fiasco!

OPSF in theory

In theory, the OPSF sounded like a great idea. The goal was to smoothen out fluctuations in domestic prices of petroleum products, by fixing (stabilizing) prices over a given period even as world crude oil prices moved up or down within the year. When crude oil price went below the assumed price on which the fixed petroleum product prices were based, oil companies paid the difference into the OPSF, which was administered by the Department of Energy. On the other hand, when crude oil prices went above the basis price, the fund compensated the oil companies for the difference. With proper management and timing of adjustments in the mandated domestic petroleum product prices, payments by companies into the fund should, over time, exactly equal the payments made to the oil companies out of the fund, leading to a zero net balance in the fund through time.

It sounds all too good in theory—and that is why people who do not realize or understand enough the nature of the problems we had during the oil industry regulation days seem enamored with the idea.

OPSF in practice

But the devil came (and I am certain will again come) in the actual implementation of the scheme. As a former energy official puts it, the OPSF became the "cash cow" of the government, especially when it found itself saddled with large fiscal deficits, which, in the late '80s and early '90s, was practically all the time—and as it is again now. That is, when the OPSF was in surplus, the government often improperly dipped its fingers into the fund that was solely meant for the price-smoothing mechanism.

Worse, the government consistently failed to adjust petroleum prices upward whenever it was clearly time to do so, i.e. when the OPSF got depleted due to rising world prices of crude. Adjusting domestic petroleum prices became a subjective political decision, rather than an objective and technical one which is what it was supposed to be. As government tended to postpone upward price adjustments for populist reasons, especially during election season, the OPSF tended to run into huge deficits of billions of pesos. And this occasionally ended up being financed by subsidies from the national treasury, i.e. from general taxpayers' (rather than petroleum consumers') money.

The other result of such unwarranted postponement of appropriate price increases was even more drastic price adjustments that had to be made when the mounting OPSF deficits made further postponement untenable. And whenever this happened, the public, and especially the aggrieved sectors like transport industry workers, had only the government to blame for the drastic price increases—and rightly so. Often, such drastic domestic price adjustments had to be made when actual world oil price movements seemed inconsistent, thereby fueling strong public protests and discontent, often accompanied by violence. Stabilization was certainly not the word to describe these outcomes.

Finally, the whole mechanism discouraged further investments in the domestic petroleum refining industry as the oil companies often got burned by long delays in payments out of the OPSF to compensate them for higher world crude prices.

Unlearning old lessons

We had corrected all these problems with the decisive move to have oil prices reflect true market conditions since 1996, just as most of the world does.

As world prices now move up due to unfortunate external circumstances beyond our control, is this reason for us to inflict on ourselves even more problems of the kind we already had before, when we entrusted to government the task of stabilizing oil prices—and instead got the reverse? *Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*

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Gov't to finalize unified tax perks plan

By Ronnel W. Domingo

OFFICIALS of the departments of Trade and Industry and of Finance as well as the National Economic and Development Authority are set to meet this week and flesh out details of a proposed unified investment perks law.

Board of Investments managing head Elmer C. Hernandez said in an interview that highlights of the envisioned new incentives system included a flexible length of income tax holiday, a single definition of an export-oriented business, and the removal of perpetual incentives after a transition period.

Hernandez said a bill had been filed in the House of Representatives that aims to consolidate the 140 existing incentives laws.

The official explained that in the proposed single incentives system, income tax holidays that are usually good for five years could be made flexible depending on the location of a new investment.

He said the income tax holiday could be as short as four years for a business within Metro Manila, six years for a domestic-oriented business outside the metropolis, and eight years for an export-oriented enterprise.

Hernandez added that all businesses that export at least half of their output would be considered export-oriented. The minimum used to vary from 50 to 75 percent of exports.

Also, he said a "sunset" clause could also be provided to set a time limit on the granting of tax perks.

Some industries would probably have developed over a certain period to a point where incentives are no longer needed to encourage investments, he said.

The BOI chief added that the government was considering to have the Investment Priorities Plan cover three years instead of only one to allow enterprises to plan their projects.

Early this month, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the government would continue giving incentives to investors as these were still necessary to continue attracting local and foreign businesses.

Purisima said the proposed Investments and Incentives Code sought to have a single incentives law, make a clear, simple, time-bound and performance-based incentives system, and bring incentives at par with those in other countries in the region.

"There is a need to change our incentives system, especially for the purpose of encouraging new investments to locate outside Metro Manila and other established investment areas," he said.

Digitel says telecom mart has room for 3 players

By Clarissa S. Batino

DIGITEL Mobile Philippines Inc., the Gokongwei group's wireless phone company operating Sun Cellular, said it would be introducing new prepaid and postpaid plans during the second half that would allow it to hit a million subscribers by year's end.

"There is room for three players in such a big market that is growing very fast," Digitel president Lance Gokongwei said in an interview.

He said the company had about 800 cellular sites and would expand the network to between 1,200 and 1,300 by the end of the fourth phase of its rollout program next year.

Gokongwei said Sun Cellular had about 700,000 subscribers as of the end of the first half, the number hardly moved from last year's level.

But the official said he was not worried about lagging the top two players, Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc., which have a combined 26.6 million subscribers as of the first semester.

"We have long legs for the race. Sun Cellular will be unveiling interesting packages during the second half so we will hit one million subscribers by the end of the year," Gokongwei said.

He said Sun Cellular would be stepping up its marketing campaign specially toward the Christmas season when people would have more money to spend.

Sun Cellular had targeted 1.5 million subscribers during its first year of operations in 2003 after launching the product in March last year.

Once the company hits 2 to 3 million subscribers, Gokongwei said it should give Sun Cellular a sufficient critical mass to compete in the cutthroat mobile phone business.

Gokongwei had said that Digitel would be spending up to $500 million this year and next to expand its cellular phone network by more than 60 percent so it could attract a solid base of loyal subscribers.

This, he said, would allow the industry's third player to compete more aggressively and address concerns being raised by some analysts that Sun Cellular's network inadequacy was driving away potential subscribers.

"I believe Sun Cellular remains competitive and our targets viable. We will continue with our network expansion programs," he said.

He admitted that Digitel's losses would peak this year because of investments needed by the wireless business.

"Definitely, it (losses) will be bigger than last year's. We continue to expect losses in the next two years. But by the last few months of 2006, we expect to break even," Gokongwei said.

Sun Cellular rolled out 641 cellular sites nationwide last year as part of the first and second phases of its network expansion project.

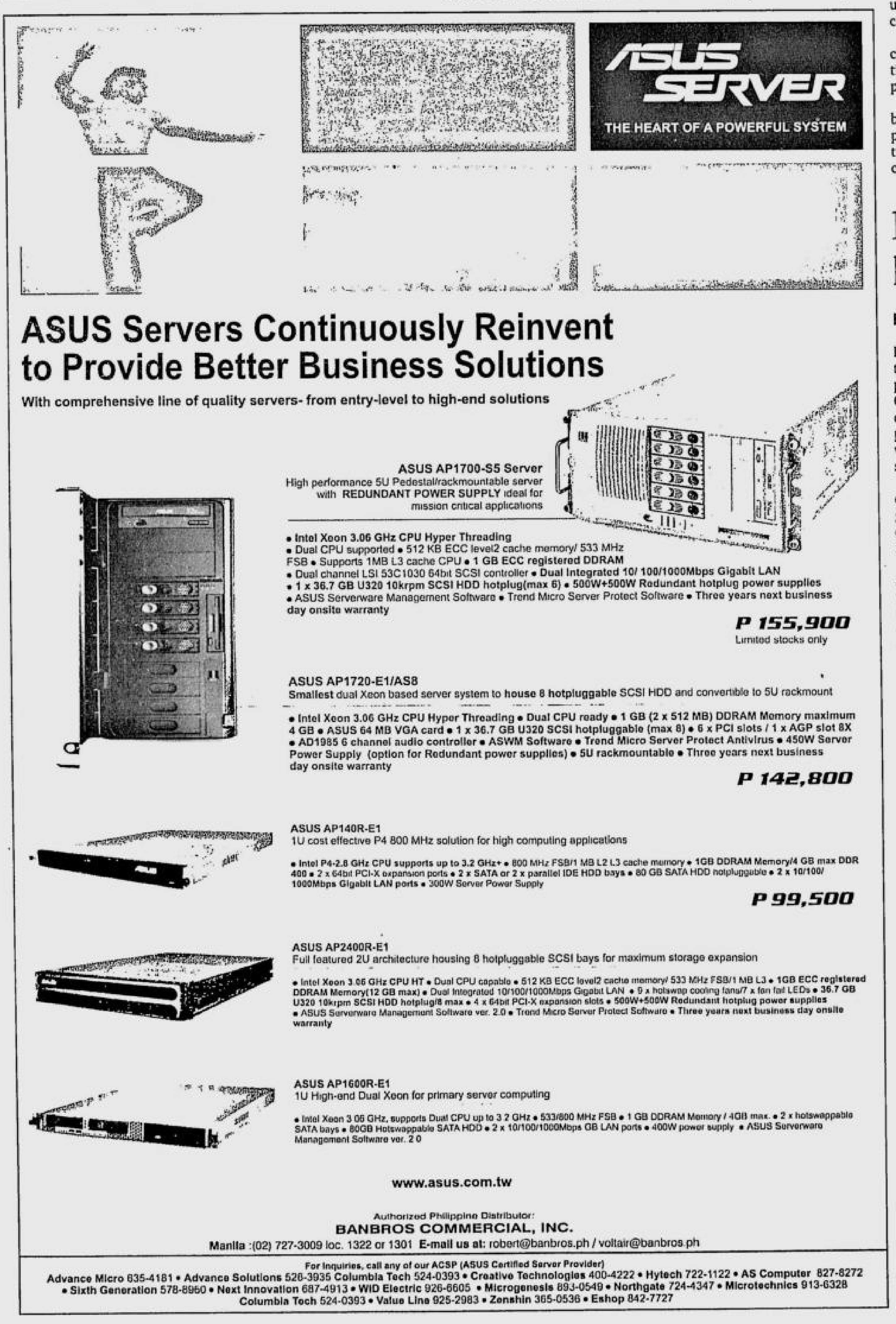
BNP Paribas Peregrine Securities, in its industry assessment in May, said that Sun Cellular would need at least $700 million to improve its network.

When Sun Cellular was launched in March 2003, it reported signing up between 3,000 and 4,000 subscribers a day. But initial interest waned as Digitel subscribers complained of poor network coverage hampered by persistent dropped calls and weak signals, according to BNP Paribas.

But despite a forecast of continued losses, Gokongwei said the company was mounting an aggressive marketing strategy to eventually become a strong third player.

An electronic loading system that would allow Sun Cellular subscribers to reload prepaid credits through text messaging from authorized agents would be introduced. Gokongwei said going into e-loading, which allowed competitors to go deeper into the market, was inevitable for Sun Cellular.

Sun Cellular has cut the cost of international calls to 30 US cents a minute against the 40 US cents offered by competitors. It is offering a postpaid package of as low as P250 a month with a free handset. Prepaid plans include a P6,500 package that gives the subscriber a rebate of P6,000 to be paid through P250 worth of free load each month.



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Madrigal claim sunk

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE SUPREME Court has torpedoed the damage suit filed by the Madrigals against outgoing Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. over their failed shipping venture.

More than that, the high court, through Justice Artemio Panganiban, even lectured the Madrigal lawyers about their "absurd" interpretation and insistence on the Supreme Court issuing a certiorari; Panganiban said the Madrigal counsels should have filed a simple motion for appeal, as a remedy for their earlier setbacks before the Manila Regional Trial Court and the Court of Appeals.

The landed Madrigal family, mainly through now Sen. Jamby Madrigal, signed a joint-venture agreement with Lorenzo and his related companies before the 1997 currency crisis wherein the Madrigals agreed to provide shipping services for the agricultural produce of the Lorenzo-controlled Del Monte plantation in Mindanao.

On the strength of the joint-venture agreement, Madrigal Transport Inc. borrowed P100 million from a bank to buy a charter vessel.

The Madrigals claimed Lorenzo and his Lapanday Holdings Corp. and Macondray and Co. failed to deliver the Del Monte charter hire contracts, and subsequently filed a damage suit in February 1998 before the Manila RTC Branch 36.

However, before that, the Madrigal shipping company also filed and was granted its petition for insolvency before another court, Manila RTC Branch 49.

With the Madrigals having been declared insolvent, Lorenzo successfully sought the dismissal of the damage suit; Manila RTC Branch 36 ruled that the Madrigals had lost the right to institute the complaint for damages, as that right now belonged to a court-appointed assignee over the insolvent shipping company.

But instead of filing an appeal, the Madrigals sought the issuance of a certiorari, an extraordinary writ issued by the higher courts to call up the records of a particular case from a lower judicial body.

"Petitioner availed of (the) certiorari (route) because the 15-day period within which to file an appeal had lapsed," Justice Panganiban noted. "Basic is the rule that certiorari is not a substitute for the lapsed remedy of appeal."

Panganiban then gave the Madrigal lawyers Mylene Marcia-Creencia and Gilbert Santos a remedial course on the legal nuances between a certiorari and an appeal.

Back in the groove again

PHILIPPINE investment conferences, which had become an oxymoron during the Erap years, just might be back in fashion again.

Given the upbeat corporate earnings and macroeconomic figures save for the budget deficit, a Hong Kong-based regional financial magazine, The Asset, thinks the Philippines has the makings of a turnaround story that merits the return of such high-caliber gatherings.

The Asset is even thinking of cranking out a Philippine special, which no regional financial magazine has done in the last five years as Manila was being bypassed by foreign investors in favor of the other regional capitals.

$10 cheaper

THIS year's fall and Christmas holiday tickets to key US and Canadian cities are actually lower by $10 from last year's similar fares, this was clarified by Northwest Airlines marketing manager Gina Campos.

The price reduction was being introduced despite historic high crude oil prices, Campos said, in reaction to Friday's column.

Northwest, considered the industry benchmark for US-bound flights out of Manila, last week announced a $699-round trip economy fare to the West Coast and a $799-similar fare to the East Coast.

Short takes

- FOREIGN Secretary Delia Albert will be appointed ambassador to a key European country or even the Philippine Mission to Geneva should the plan to transfer Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo to Padre Faura push through.
- Metro Pacific director Alfredo Xerez-Burgos controls AB Holdings that last week acquired a 10.33-percent stake of Metro Pacific in Landco, the developer of Peninsula de Punta Fuego.
- The Singapore-Philippine thrift bank venture, Citystate, is the first savings bank to pass and be accredited with the Bancnet online project that allows Internet transactions.

Heard through the grapevine

JOURNALISM bigwig Maximo "Max" V. Soliven is being asked by the Securities and Exchange Commission to explain why his newspaper, where he is both chair and publisher, has failed to submit since 1996 the company's annual general information sheet.

In addition, the Soliven company is being asked why its crucial stock and transfer book has not been registered since it was founded in 1986, almost two decades ago.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com)

Finance bucks moratorium . . .

From page B1

amnesty, and the rationalization of fiscal incentives.

These proposed measures are expected to generate an additional P80 billion in revenue a year, and help the government achieve a zero deficit over the medium term.

The budget deficit stood at P199.9 billion last year, and the government hopes to slightly trim it down to P197.8 billion by year's end.

The past years' budget deficits, which resulted from higher expenditure and low revenue collection, had forced the government to resort to heavy borrowings. The national government's debt now stands at more than P4 trillion.

"The threat of a fiscal crisis is really there, we badly need to address our budget problems," Tan said.

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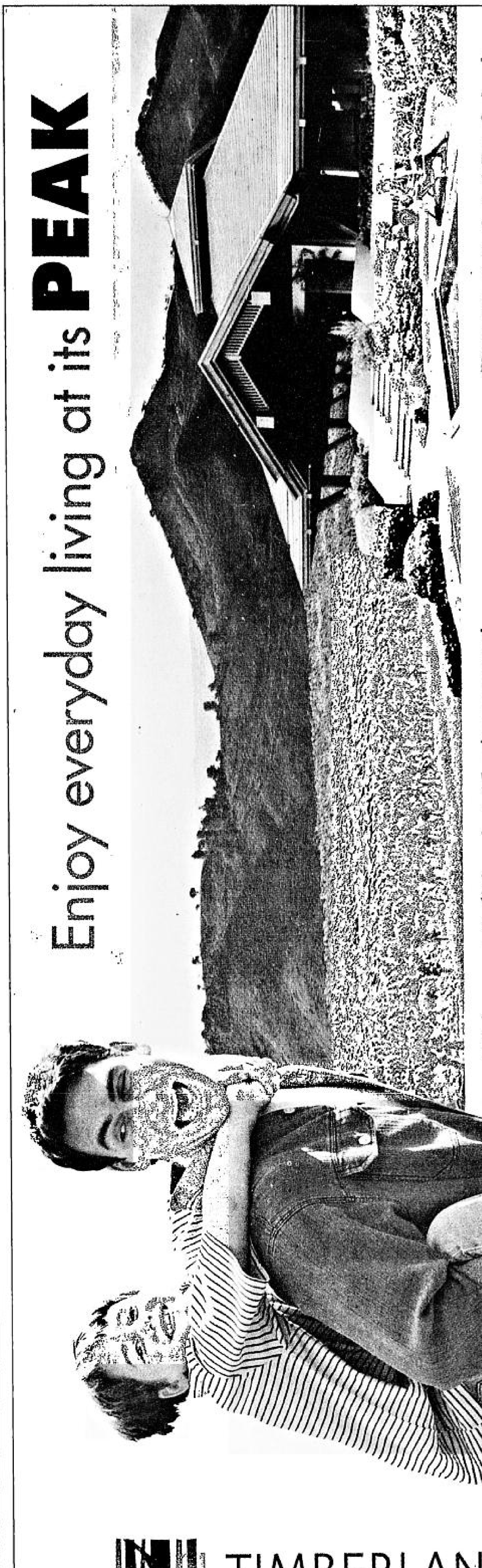
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SEC stops Iligan City gov't from bidding out NSC assets

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has barred the city treasurer of Iligan City from bidding out any of the assets of National Steel Corp., in connection with a row over the steel firm's back taxes.

The SEC has also stayed the execution of any warrant of levy or tax against the assets of the steel company.

NSC told the SEC in a manifestation dated Aug. 10 that the city government of Iligan City issued an ordinance last Aug. 3 ordering the city treasurer to slap a levy on all properties of NSC.

The city government of Iligan intends to collect from NSC real estate tax liabilities amounting to P928.06 million.

NSC had asked the SEC to direct the city government of Iligan, its officers and agents to cease and desist from issuing any warrant or levy, and from bidding out any of its properties.

In a cease and desist order dated Aug. 12, the SEC said NSC was under liquidation and as such, no claimant, including the government, could collect on its assets. Existing SEC rules on corporate recovery provides that every disposal of property for the purpose of liquidation will have to be approved by the SEC.

Upon the appointment of lawyer Danilo Concepcion as liquidator, all assets of NSC were entrusted to him for the benefit of creditors and stockholders. Only the liquidator is allowed to dispose of any of the assets and to use the proceeds of such sales to settle claims against the firm.

The assets of NSC are also exempted from any order of garnishment, levy, attachment or execution, the SEC said.

The SEC said the city government of Iligan could not proceed to satisfy any tax claim against the properties of NSC.

In a separate order dated Aug. 13, the SEC also lifted a warrant of levy issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue against the assets of NSC.

The BIR wanted to collect P3.98 million worth of taxes from NSC. The SEC said that the BIR seized the assets of NSC by virtue of the warrant to collect on the liabilities.

The SEC directed the BIR to return said properties or to refund any amount raised from the sale of any of these assets.

BSP OKs Smart's plan to issue new securities

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board has approved the issuance by leading wireless provider Smart Communications Inc. of $200 million worth of new securities to take out the debts hounding affiliate Pilipino Telephone Corp.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the MB gave its final approval last Thursday to the deal, which required its go-ahead since the new issuance would represent foreign obligations and could cause Piltel creditors to exceed their dollar overbought limit.

Reyes said the arrangement would resolve the debts owned by Piltel to more than 15 banks, including 12 local banks as well as some offshore banking units and foreign bank branches.

Smart earlier offered to buy the debts of Piltel and gave the affiliate's creditor-banks several options wherein the former's debts would be exchanged with its own securities issuances.

The final arrangement, Reyes said, would be the offering by Smart of new unsecured notes due 2007, 2008 and 2014.

"We've looked at the loan agreements," Reyes said. "This will improve the NPL (nonperforming loan) ratio of the banking system."

Taipan shares business tips

TAIPAN Lucio Tan on Friday told aspiring businessmen not to be discouraged by early failures, saying such experiences would teach them valuable lessons.

In a message during an entrepreneur's forum sponsored by the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII), Tan recalled that his earliest attempt at business had failed. Undaunted by this early setback, he said the experience made him more determined to get back on his feet and start anew.

From his failed corn starch venture to a modest chemical trading firm and, later, a tobacco company called Fortune, Tan said he slowly laid the foundation for his business enterprise. Now one of the biggest in Southeast Asia, the Tan Group has interests in aviation, alcohol and beverages, banking and finance, construction, real estate, tobacco and others.

Citing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as primary engines of growth, Tan told aspiring businessmen not to be afraid despite their limited access to working capital and sweeping globalization.

"Size is not important; what matters is strength," he stressed.

He encouraged SMEs, especially in the countryside, to build on their natural advantages. He said financial institutions like the Philippine National Bank (PNB) and Allied Bank offered special lending windows for small businesses and other start-ups.

To succeed in the global marketplace, Tan suggested the following strategies:

- Keep the organization lean by concentrating on businesses that do not require mass production;
- concentrate on markets that are near the Philippines;
- produce precision products that require light equipment, and
- take advantage of Filipino creativity and abundant human capital by engaging in labor-intensive enterprises.

Insurance buyer's heavy taxes

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

WHEN President Macapagal-Arroyo said in her State of the Nation Address (Sona) that Filipinos were not paying enough taxes, she could not have been referring to the insurance buyer.

The insurance buyer is the most heavily taxed creature in the country.

If you buy an insurance policy on your car, you pay three separate taxes on the premium: 10 percent value added, 12.5 percent documentary, half-percent local government. That is a total of 23 percent on top of your premium. You are clobbered with that tax whether you are insuring a limousine or a tricycle.

If you buy a fire insurance policy on your house, you pay an additional 2-percent fire service tax. That brings the total to a whopping 25 percent on top of your premium. The same tax is charged whether you are insuring a Forbes Park mansion or a low-cost housing unit.

If any taxpayer is taxed more heavily than the insurance buyer, I missed him in my scanning of the tax code. But, there surely is nothing else that you can buy where the invoice shows four separate taxes slapped onto the purchase price.

Not only that, the agent or broker earns an average of about 15 percent in commissions. Thus, the government makes more money out of the insurance buyer than the agent or broker, who does all the work.

How much is the government's take? Based on the Insurance Commission's 2000 report (the latest available), I estimate that, in 2004, the total taxes slapped on non-life insurance buyers will reach P6.5 billion.

If you buy a life insurance policy, you do not see the taxes on any of the documents. This is because the taxes are built into the premium. But based again on the Insurance Commission's 2000 report, I estimate that, in 2004, the taxes slapped on life insurance buyers will reach P4.3 billion.

Which brings the total taxes on insurance buyers to P10.8 billion this year. That is nothing to sneeze at.

Why is the insurance buyer taxed so heavily? Because he is vulnerable. If he takes out a loan, or opens a letter of credit, he is forced to buy an insurance policy. Even if he does not borrow money, he insures his house anyway to avoid going bankrupt in case his house burns down. He also buys as much life insurance as he can afford so that, in case a taxi runs him over, his wife and kids won't end up in the poorhouse.

To add insult to injury, the insurance taxes are not used for the purposes for which the taxes are collected. The fire service tax was supposed to be for the purchase of fire trucks. Do you see any new fire trucks anywhere? The local government tax goes to where the policy is issued, not to where the building is located. If a policy is issued in Makati on a building located in Davao, the tax goes to Makati, not Davao. The tax then is of no help to the owner in Davao.

The biggest anomaly is the documentary stamp tax. It is supposed to be a tax on the document, but is based on the premium. A multipage fire insurance policy can have a premium as low as P1,000, and the stamp tax is P125. A single-page marine insurance policy can have a premium of P100,000, and the stamp tax is P12,500. In Singapore, the stamp tax is one solitary dollar, no matter how big the policy is.

So, when President goes around the country pleading for more taxes during the Pulong Bayan, I hope she does not mean the insurance buyer.

Sluggish trading seen

From page B1

managers heed for new catalysts that could toss the Phisix above the 1,600 level," Grace Cerdenia of 2TradeAsia.com said.

Among the blue chips that announced positive results included Ayala Corp., which said it earned 90 percent more in the first half at P2.64 billion. International Container Terminal Services Inc. also said gross revenue in the second quarter rose 28 percent due to improved cargo-handling income from foreign units in Poland and Brazil.

SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's largest mall chain operator, said second-quarter earnings was up 11 percent at P1.07 billion.

"The market, however, remains in consolidation. While earnings are improving there are concerns about the current trend of rising oil prices, above $45 a barrel, which may push inflation higher," BPI Trade said.

It also said fears of an increase in oil prices might crimp consumption and affect company profits.

The US Federal Reserve recently raised key interest rates by a quarter percentage point but BPI Trade said this had been expected by the market.

"The market needs positive news to lure back investors to the market. Market direction will be dictated by the movement of oil prices," it said.

Cerdenia echoed the same sentiment, saying investors were waiting for key fiscal and monetary measures that could help soften the blow of increasing consumer prices.

"Over and above selecting stocks that have enough cash hoard to support expansion plans, investors' radar screens might also be locked on the main beneficiary of these funds and joint-venture schemes, as well as those that have plotted additional income sources that can sustain expected bottom line growth," she said.

She said the market might trade between 1,580 and 1,620. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 13, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17.5	17	17.25	289,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41	41	41	41	104,500
China Banking Corp.	535	535	535	535	1,210
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	40	40	39.5	39.5	23,400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	300,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	25.5	26	92,600
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	5,600
Phil. Savings Bank	27.5	27.5	27	27.5	15,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	21.75	21.75	21.75	21.75	1,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.25	24.25	23.75	23.75	5,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	160	179	160	179	400
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.32	1.32	369,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	110	110	110	110	1,750
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1485	1485	1485	1485	380
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21	21	21	21	28,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.65	0.65	4,520,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	905	905	900	905	34,030
Ipeople Inc.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.48	153,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.043	0.043	0.043	0.043	100,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.036	2,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.55	13,033,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	30,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1285	1285	1270	1270	62,940
Ivantage Corp.	0.73	0.78	0.66	0.67	42,230,000
Philweb Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	4,600,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	15	15	21,900
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	23.25	22.75	23.25	227,800
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	762,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.36	2.36	35,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	178,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.55	100,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	550,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,610,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	5,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	1,080,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	5,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	25.5	26	25.5	26	700
RFM Corp.	0.77	0.84	0.77	0.82	230,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	57.5	56.5	57.5	102,400
San Miguel Corp. B	70.5	70.5	70	70.5	26,700
Universal Robina Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	75,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.32	0.3	0.31	1,350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	6,880,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	109,000
Alo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.024	1,500,000
APC Group Inc.	0.0925	0.0925	0.0725	0.0725	400,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	65,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.1	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	27,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.51	4,850,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	560,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.25	0.22	0.24	13,810,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.36	1.48	12,100,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	1,000,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	3	3	3	3	1,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24	23.5	23.75	272,200
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.0775	0.0725	0.0775	33,700,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	50,000
Ionics Inc.	1.24	1.4	1.24	1.38	2,503,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.68	1.68	23,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.36	1.36	209,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	2,400,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	205,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	80,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.34	0.3	0.33	44,150,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	4,000,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.145	0.145	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.14	0.15	2,190,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.215	0.22	0.215	0.22	1,500,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	76,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.99	1	0.99	1	4,900,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.07	5,600,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.78	0.79	0.73	0.74	38,410,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	1,730,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	21	21.25	21	21	171,100
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	40,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,700
PLDT 10% Pref Series Dd	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	1,954,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.51	0.52	0.51	0.51	990,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.235	0.26	0.235	0.26	6,330,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	3,640,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.98	430,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.06	0.095	0.06	0.095	600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	200,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	1,680,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.9	21,740,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0044	0.0044	0.0042	0.0044	215,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.35	36,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.23	0.22	0.225	7,100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	4,080,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	13,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	215,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	123,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.4	8,160,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	1,310,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.135	0.14	0.135	0.14	400,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	18,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0038	0.004	0.0038	0.0038	101,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	20,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.1	3.1	2.65	2.65	410,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.036	0.036	0.034	0.035	4,400,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	200,000

CURRENCIES

August 15, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.815993	1.000000	55.6410
Japan	Yen	0.007359	0.009018	0.5018
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487230	1.822600	101.4113
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104639	0.128235	7.1351
Switzerland	Franc	0.649676	0.796178	44.3001
Canada	Dollar	0.613022	0.751258	41.8007
Singapore	Dollar	0.475742	0.583022	32.4399
Australia	Dollar	0.581647	0.712809	39.6614
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.164554	2.652661	147.5967
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.217599	0.266667	14.8376
Brunei	Dollar	0.474360	0.581328	32.3457
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000108	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019662	0.024096	1.3407
UAE	Dirham	0.222172	0.272272	15.1495
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.225500	68.1880
Argentina	Peso	0.270420	0.331400	18.4394
Brazil	Real	0.269394	0.330142	18.3694
Denmark	Kroner	0.134446	0.164764	9.1676
India	Rupee	0.017678	0.021664	1.2054
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214764	0.263193	14.6443
Mexico	New Peso	0.071409	0.087512	4.8693
New Zealand	Dollar	0.536838	0.657895	36.6059
Norway	Kroner	0.120394	0.147543	8.2094
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013908	0.017044	0.9483
South Africa	Rand	0.127290	0.155994	8.6797
Korea	Won	0.000705	0.000864	0.0481
Sweden	Kroner	0.108618	0.133111	7.4064
Syria	Pound	0.019777	0.024237	1.3486
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023950	0.029351	1.6331
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000426	0.000522	0.0290

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Forest Hills "A"	-	170,000
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Makati Sports Club "A"	please call	200K
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Manila Polo Club		2.350M
Manila Southwoods "A"	375K	-
Manila Southwoods "B"	650K	
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Orchard Golf Club "A"	-	200K
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Quezon City Sports Club "A"	165K	
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Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.7M	1.5M
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Cebu Country Club	-	1,300,000
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Forest Hills A/C*	160,000/250,000*	210,000*
Luisita Golf	400,000	-
Manila Golf Ind/Corp*	-	10,500,000
Manila Polo	-	2,350,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	420,000	670,000*
Makati Sports Club	220,000	180,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	150,000	90,000/100,000*
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Mt. Malarayat B	-	250,000
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Gov't urging big companies to go public

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AFTER the recent listing of an oil firm on the stock exchange, investors are awaiting who will finally brave the market and make an initial public offering.

The Department of Energy is urging energy and oil firms to make their IPO at this time.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said the government was urging the likes of energy company Mirant Global Corp., a joint venture between the Metrobank Group and private power producer Mirant Philippines, and oil refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. to offer their shares to the public.

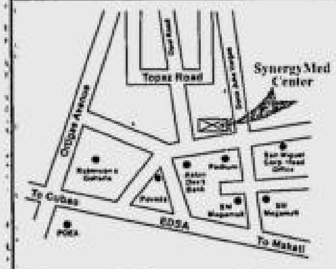
This was after the recent listing of oil exploration firm PetroEnergy Resources Corp.

"I am pleased that PetroEnergy had listed because it will encourage other companies to follow suit," he said.

Perez said the energy department was working with the PSE in encouraging these companies to list given a clear view of the next six years under the Arroyo administration. "We believe it is a good time to get listed on the exchange," he added.

Sources in the PSE told the INQUIRER that the exchange had also received word that the local unit of fast food giant McDonalds was keen on holding an IPO.

Golden Arches Development Corp. is the local firm that runs the McDonald's fast-food chain in the country. Golden Arches president George Yang earlier said it was possible to conduct an IPO in the next five years but added that there was no specific plan yet as of this time. Golden Arches estimates it may spend P500 million to P1 billion to put up additional stores this year. So far, GADC operates 240 stores nationwide.



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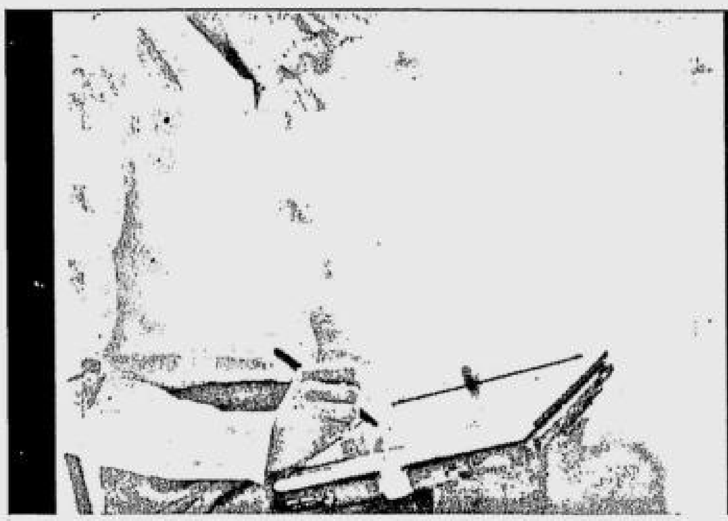

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Banks to yield dollars in forex mart

REYES

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved a new policy requiring banks to include foreign currency options in the computation of their net open foreign exchange position. This, in effect, would push the banks to unload their excess dollars in the foreign exchange market.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor for bank supervision and examination Alberto Reyes said the peso's uptrend in the past few days was partly fueled by some banks' unloading of dollars in anticipation of a new circular on currency options.

A currency option is a contract which gives an investor the right to buy or sell a specified amount of currency before a specified period of time.

It is a form of derivative, or hedging instrument, whose value is based on the worth of the underlying currency.

The BSP's policy-making unit, the Monetary Board, on Thursday ruled that the options would henceforth be included in the computation of the banks' net open foreign exchange position, Reyes said.

"Some of the banks, when they include currency options (in the computation), will have higher overbought position, so they have to sell dollars to comply with the limit," Reyes told reporters.

Under the BSP's current rules, the banks' overbought, or long on dollar, position is limited to only 2.5 percent of their unimpaired capital, or $5 million, whichever is lower.

The restriction, which is adjusted by the MB depending on the state of the foreign exchange market, is meant to prevent speculative attacks against the local currency.

Prior to the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, the allowable overbought position was as high as 25 percent of banks' unimpaired capital.

"There's some risk involved in taking currency options, therefore, they should be included," Reyes said.

"As buyers of foreign exchange options, banks' purchases or sales depend on whether the price of an underlying currency is attractive (enough for them to buy)," he explained.

Reyes said this inclusion would address regulatory gaps "in a manner that is sensitive to risk management capabilities."

He added that the new ruling was in line with international practices.

A similar treatment on currency options is observed in other markets like Hong Kong, India, Thailand and Indonesia.

"This will also bring about more liquidity to the foreign exchange market," he said.

The inclusion of currency options in the banks' net foreign exchange position, Reyes said, should also bring more currency option transactions out in the open.

A circular shall be issued to implement this new ruling very soon, according to Reyes.

The BSP deputy governor also said that the ruling did not mean that more derivative instruments would soon be included in the overbought position.

Reyes said only the currency option would have a significant impact on the foreign exchange market and should thus be treated as part of the banks' actual dollar holdings.

Thai tax plan seen to hurt RP SUV exports

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THAILAND's new vehicle excise tax scheme could hurt the export of completely built up sports utility vehicles from the Philippines, according to an industry source.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the source said that Thailand would impose higher taxes on imported "off-road purpose vehicles," or OPVs, this September.

Three months after that, Thai officials will impose the same tax scheme on OPVs assembled in Thailand.

"Three months is a long time when you are exporting vehicles," the source said. "Particularly, the Ford Escape and the Mazda Tribute will be affected."

Thailand's new tax scheme is based on the simplified classification of vehicles: passenger vehicles, pickup trucks, vehicles with 11 or more seats, and tuk-tuks—the Thai tricycle.

According to the new classification, OPVs or sports utility vehicles with four-wheel drive systems, would be taxed as passenger cars.

OPVs used to be taxed at 29 percent, while cars were taxed at between 35 and 48 percent.

With the new tax scheme, Thai authorities hoped to encourage the use of vehicles with smaller engines.

In the case of the Ford SUV, excise taxes would go up from 29 percent to 35 percent for the 2.3-liter version, and 40 percent for the 3-liter version.

This development came about just as Ford Motor Co. Philippines was broadening its export market to include Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore.

On Friday, Ford Philippines—the only exporter of completely built units—sent off its first batch of 100 CBUs to Malaysia.

As of the first half of 2004, Ford has exported 5,500 vehicles—4,300 of which were shipped to Thailand.

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P8 BILLION A YEAR

DOTC eyes revenue measures

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE TRANSPORT Department is working closely with other agencies to come up with measures to raise an additional P8 billion in revenue a year from transport-related taxes and fees.

Transport Undersecretary Arturo Valdez said the additional income would come from reforms in the operation of taxicabs, issuance of vanity plates, third-party insurance of vehicles and importation of used vehicles from economic free ports.

Anneli Lontoc, head of the Land Transportation Office, said that within this quarter, government agencies including the LTO, the Bureau of Customs, the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority and the trade department would sign an agreement to plug revenue loopholes in the importation of used vehicles.

She said the measure would mean an additional P2.5 billion in annual revenue for the government.

Valdez explained that the amount was based on the monthly sale of about 5,000 used vehicles from Subic.

Used vehicles are also brought in through the port of Cebu.

The DOTC is also counting on an additional P2.2 billion a year from requiring taxi drivers to issue official receipts.

Valdez said the receipts would enable the BIR to correctly impose a 3 percent gross receipts tax on taxi operators.

On the other hand, the issuance of third-party insurance could also bring in about P1.5 billion yearly, while the organized issuance of vanity plates would contribute in about P3.5 billion over the next five years.

The Department of Transportation and Communication brings in as much as P30 billion in revenue to the government.

Revenue reforms, according to transport officials, are being pushed to help the Macapagal administration meet its budget deficit target of P197.8 billion this year.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee had asked agencies like the LTO and the Air Transportation Authority to increase fees to help the government generate more funds.

Last year, the LTO collected about P7.5 billion in fees for licenses.

The Philippine Ports Authority collected P5 billion from terminal and wharfage fees and the Manila International Airport Authority earned P4.6 billion from terminal and other airport fees.

Agencies remit their revenues to the national treasury monthly and these are added to the national government's total collection.

PNB to sell ₱10B in bad loans, assets

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank plans to sell about P10 billion worth of bad assets within the next two months, using the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) framework.

The bank, which tapped Ernest & Young to evaluate its non-performing assets, is rushing to meet the deadline to qualify for tax relief and other incentives under the SPV Law.

"We've looked at the assets and we're now awaiting board approval. Some P10 billion worth of assets have been identified for sale," E&Y senior manager Beaux Pontak said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

E&Y, which is also handling the asset sale of the state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines, was confident that the two banks would meet the deadline to avail themselves of incentives under the SPV Law.

The SPV Law, which took effect in April 2002, intends to help banks get rid of their non-performing assets by waiving some of the taxes and reducing fees usually collected from the sale or transfer of assets.

The law waived the documentary stamp tax, capital gains tax and e-VAT (expanded value added tax) and likewise reduced the registration/transfer fees by 50 percent.

The tax reliefs and other benefits are available only up to April 8, 2005 while the deadline to register with the BSP to take advantage of these perks will lapse in mid-September.

PNB is saddled with about P40 billion worth of bad assets.

Its management acknowledges that if the bank would not resort to a wholesale asset sale using the SPV framework, it would take a long time to clean up its portfolio.

Last year, PNB sold more idle real estate assets than most of local property companies, posting a record P24 billion in gross asset sales.

PNB, once the country's biggest bank, is headed for a second straight year of profitability and may bail itself out of a 10-year state-assisted rehabilitation program faster than expected.

Once the bank strengthens its balance sheet, it plans to pre-pay the P6.1 billion in outstanding debt owed to the government. The government and the group of tabacco magnate Lucio Tan hold 45 percent each of PNB.

Mine project named ecozone

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE $45-MILLION Rapu Rapu Polymettalic Mine Project in Legaspi, Albay, of Lafayette Phils. Inc. was named a special economic zone.

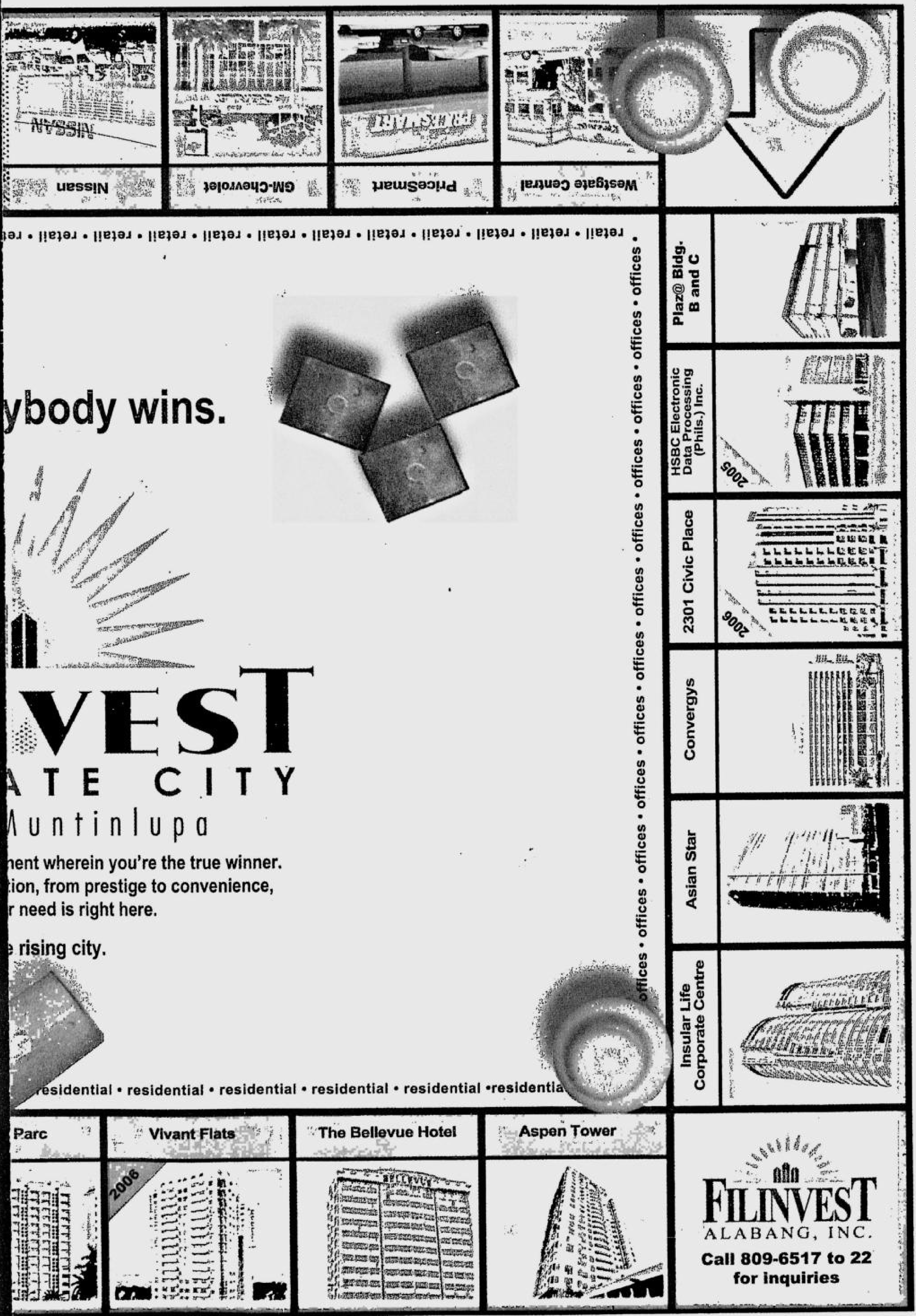
According to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Mines and Geosciences Bureau, this would entitle Lafayette to a four-year income tax holiday and exemption from paying duties on specialized mining equipment.

However, Lafayette will be required to export at least 70 percent of its production.

Lafayette Philippines president Rod Watt said in an interview that the mining project was on schedule and would be completed next year.

The Rapu Rapu Polymetallic Project is one of the first mining projects to be approved after 15 years.

The mine was said to be capable of producing 37,000 tons of copper concentrates, 25,000 tons of zinc and 50,000 ounces of gold each year over six to seven years.



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Oil jitters cloud US outlook

NEW YORK—Soaring crude prices plus worries about the economy and the outlook for earnings are expected to hang over the stock market this week during the depth of the summer doldrums.

US oil prices topped $46 a barrel on Friday, setting new highs every trading session except one in August, and showing little sign of slowing a steady climb since June.

A host of issues, the latest being Sunday's referendum in Venezuela, raise concerns about world supply.

Investors will get more clues about inflation and the economy when three key indicators for July are released on Tuesday: the Consumer Price Index, housing starts and industrial production and capacity utilization.

If the data meet expectations, that might suggest improvement and break up the gloom brought on by oil, said Richard Suttmeier, chief market strategist at Joseph Stevens & Co.

"The key is getting through this soft patch, which obviously is caused by crude oil and what I'll call politics," he said.

Overall CPI is expected to be up 0.1 percent in July, after a 0.3-percent gain in June, while core CPI, excluding volatile food and energy costs, is forecast to gain 0.2 percent, according to analysts surveyed by Reuters. In June, core CPI was up 0.1 percent.

Industrial production is forecast to reverse a decline and rise 0.5 percent in July, while plant utilization is expected to gain 3/10ths of a percent to 77.5 percent, a Reuters poll of economists showed.

Housing starts in July should rise to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.900 million units after dropping in June to a rate of 1.802 million units.

The close presidential race has caused companies, which have plenty of money, to postpone spending on major investments because of the uncertain outcome of the November election, Suttmeier said.

On Friday, US crude jumped to $46.65 a barrel—the highest price in the 21 years that oil futures have been traded on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

Stocks ended Friday's session slightly higher, but still near fresh 2004 closing lows set the previous day. *Reuters*

Why are oil prices so high?

LONDON—US oil prices set another record on the New York Mercantile Exchange on Friday, reaching $45.99 a barrel, the highest since NYMEX launched its crude contract in 1983.

Following are some of the factors behind oil's price surge.

China's economic expansion has given a dramatic boost to world oil demand, drawing in crude and refined products from all around the world.

Chinese crude imports are up 40 percent so far this year and show no sign of slowing despite high oil prices and government efforts to calm economic growth.

Lack of spare supply capacity

Since prices hit the $40+ level that threatens to slow economic growth, the Opec producer cartel has surged its production to the highest level in 25 years in an effort to keep prices under control.

This has left little spare capacity outside top world exporter Saudi Arabia.

The strain on the world supply system has left it more vulnerable to supply disruptions and increased the likelihood of price spikes.

Opec, which controls around half the world's exports, has also in recent years worked hard to stop stocks building, especially in the United States, during periods of seasonally weak demand.

Political tensions in the Middle East and violence in Iraq have undermined traders' confidence in security of supply from the region, which pumps a third of the world's oil.

Iraqi exports, not long back to pre-war volumes, have been repeatedly hit by sabotage attacks.

Supply security concerns have spurred many countries to increase strategic inventories, withdrawing supply from an already tight market.

Environmental regulations are pushing up the price of making fuel, forcing companies to build expensive new facilities and making it harder to ship supplies between regions.

Environmental regulations have made it more expensive to build new refineries, and much harder to get the necessary permits.

Scarcer oil

Big oil reservoirs are becoming harder to find and more expensive to develop. Many of the oil provinces outside Opec are mature, which means that finds are now smaller, need more costly technology to develop and fall faster from peak production.

In Opec, which holds around two-thirds of the world's oil reserves, many of the bigger nations either do not allow foreign investment in oil, or have unattractive investment and legal terms. *Reuters*

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
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METRO MANILA

IN RE: PETITION FOR AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AS
A DOMESTIC AIRFREIGHT FORWARDER
CAB Case No. EP-24970

CTSI LOGISTICS PHILS., INC.,
Petitioners.
x--x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 776, as amended, Notice is hereby given that **CTSI LOGISTICS PHILS., INC.** has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a petition for authority to operate as a domestic airfreight forwarder. The hearing on the above-entitled case is scheduled on 03 **September 2004** at 10:00 AM at the CAB Conference Room, Old MIA Road, Pasay City before the undersigned Hearing Officer, at which proceeding the applicant shall present the relevant evidence.

Under Section 16 of R.A. 776, the applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation or have copies thereof and the application sent to all domestic airfreight forwarder, either by personal service or by registered mail with return card at least five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.

Parties opposed to the granting of this application must file their written opposition on or before the date of hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant and appear at the hearing with such evidence as may be proper under the premises. Failure on the part of any interested party to file their opposition on time and appear at the hearing shall be construed as a waiver of their right to be heard and the Civil Aeronautics Board shall proceed to hear and decide the application on its merits.

Let a copy of the petition and this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

12 August 2004
Pasay City, Philippines

(Sgd.) KATHERINE M. LEGARDA
Hearing Officer

Copy furnished:
Ms. Aurora G. Yambot
Division Manager
CTSI Logistics Phils., Inc.
Unit ABC Columbia Airfreight

(PDI--Aug 16, 23 & 30, 2004)

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

INVITATION TO BID

The **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC)** invites interested bidders for the sale of its property with a total area of 5,176 square meter located along C. Arellano Blvd. Pier 2, Brgy. San Roque, Cebu City on an **"as-is-where-is"** basis. The minimum bid is set at P82,112,000.00.

Interested parties may secure Bidding Guidelines and Bid Forms beginning 16 August, 2004, as follows:

For Metro Manila bidders:
National Development Company
c/o The Secretariat
Bids and Awards Committee
7th Floor, NDC Bldg.,
116 Tordesillas St. Salcedo Village, Makati City
Tel. Nos. (02) 840-48-38
local 245 or 256

For Metro Cebu bidders:
c/o Atty. Romulo R. Senining
Managing Partner
Senining, Belciña & Atup Law Office
M. Lhuillier Bldg., Benedicto St.
Reclamation Area, Cebu City.
Tel. Nos. 233-20-30 and 416-61-71

A pre-bid conference shall be held on 27 August, 2004 at 10:30 AM at the NDC Board Room, 8th Floor, NDC Building.

Bids must be sealed and must be submitted not later than 3:00 PM of 7 September, 2004 labeled and addressed as follows:

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee
National Development Company

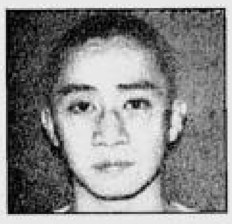
The opening of sealed bids is scheduled on 7 September, 2004 at 3:00 P.M. at the NDC Board Room, 8th Floor, NDC Building in the presence of all bidder(s) and/or their authorized representative prepared in the prescribed forms and accompanied by a 10% bid bond. Bids received after 3:00 PM shall no longer be accepted.

The NDC BAC reserves the right to reject any and all bids or to waive any formality hereto and/or accept any such bids or portion of bids as may be advantageous to NDC.

(PDI–Aug. 15, 16 & 17, 2004)

BAC Chairman

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



This is to inform the public that **CHAD JEREMY Z. SANEZ** and **IMELDA C. SANEZ** of #5 Melanio De St., Brgy. Salapan, San Juan, Metro Manila, are no longer connected with **MCA DEPLOYMENT SERVICES**, located at # 49 Countryside Ave., Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Pasig City, effective May 2004

Any transaction made by them in the name of the aforementioned company shall in no way be honored.

(PDI--Aug. 16, 2004)

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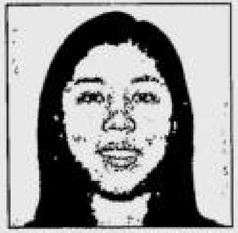

A warrant of arrest has been issued by the RTC-Caloocan under Criminal Case No. C-69554 for Estafa against **JUDITH SY ROSALES,** whose picture appears above with last known address at **12 Zorra St., Paltok, San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City.**
Any person with information on her whereabouts may call *Tamargo Panganiban Sanchez Law Office* at Telephone Nos. 241-8780 or 241-0594 loc. 30

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Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

NPC-MMSD 2004-105

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements.

Schedule	Date/ Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No./Inquiry No.	ABC
I	Sept. 7, 2004 10:00 AM Pahiyas Room	Mechanical Parts for Casiguran DPP "Cummins"	PB031204-MMAM9795 (PB2)	2,211,716.00
II		Mechanical Parts for Air Compressor of PB 105 "Daihatsu"	PB040907-MMAD1584	1,109,629.20
III		Overcurrent/Reclosing Protection Relay for WMTSD	PB040720-MMLD1241 (PB2)	2,550,000.00
IV	Sept. 7, 2004 2:00 P.M. Pahiyas Room	Mechanical Parts for Concepcion Diesel Plant "Dale Perkins"	PB040907-MMAM1585	1,111,410.00
V		Mechanical Parts for Polillo Diesel Plant "Perkins"	PB040907-MMSB1586	3,081,600.00
VI	Sept. 8, 2004 10:00 A.M. Pahiyas Room	Mechanical Parts for Marinawa Diesel Plant "CKD"	PB040908-MMAD1587	14,395,500.00
VII		Mechanical Parts for Marinawa Diesel Plant "GM"	PB040908-MMAD1588	4,011,000.00
VII		Supply for services, materials & equipment for the remanufacturing of Cylinder Heads & Liners and Turbochargers Gas Casing of PB 105	PB040908-MMAD1589	1,360,000.00

NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
All Schedules	Aug. 26, 2004	2:00 P.M.	Peñafrancia Function Room

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Services Division. Materials Management Dept., of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 9245357 / 9245477 upon payment of non-refundable fee of PHP 500.00 per schedule starting on August 16, 2004, from 8:30 to 11:30 A.M. only. No bid documents will be issued 3 days before the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, MMSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Certificate of Registration issued by PSD/MMSD will be honored provided that the Certification is still valid.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of Republic Act No. 9184.

The bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to a percentage of the approved budget for the contract to be bid in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Irrevocable Letter of Credit – One Percent (1%), Bank Guarantee – One and a half percent (1.5%), Surety Bond – Two and a half percent (2.5%), penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) LORENZO S. MARCELO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
MMSD-NPC

(PDI – August 16 & 23, 2004)

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on **August 26, 2004**, 2:00 p.m., Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
MANILA			
MALO-02	3838 Mascardo St., Tejeros, Makati City	355 m² residential lot (TCT No. 219849) w/ bldg.	P 8,129,500.00
AM-ED-217	2072 Anonas St., Sta. Mesa	300.2 m² residential lot (TCT No. 245737) w/ bldg.	P 3,363,000.00
AM-PY-218	INA Exec. Homes I, Levitown Estate Subd., La Huerta, Parañaque City	190 m² residential lot (TCT No. 144520) w/ bldg.	P 864,075.00
AM-CP-219	Andora vs. Jackson Sts., Vista Verde Subd., Bo. Llano, Caloocan City	Residential lots: TCT No. C-348039 - 276 m² C-348031 - 190 m² C-349032 - 190 m²	 P 683,100.00 P 441,750.00 P 441,750.00
AM-PY-220	Congressional Model Subd., Camarin, Caloocan City	228 m² residential lot (TCT No. 334416)	P 383,040.00
BATANGAS			
AM-MC-221	Brgy. Alangilan, Batangas City	18,139 m² industrial lot (TCT No. 53085) w/bldgs. & impvts./Granty crane foundation	P 45,780,000.00
AM-JA-222	Along National Road, San Rafael, Sto. Tomas	1,185 m² residential-commercial lot (TCT No. T-86841) w/ bldgs. & freezing eqpt.	P 5,070,000.00
AM-PY-223	Brgy. Sta. Rita, Batangas City	2-adjoining semi-commercial lots (TCT Nos. T-43159 & 43160), total area of 590 m², w/ bldg.	P 1,911,000.00
BULACAN			
MALO-01	Bo. Catmon, Malolos City	4 adjoining commercial lots (TCT Nos. T-91884 & 91885) total area of 866 m²	P 19,052,000.00
CAVITE			
AM-ML-224	Bo. Iruhin, Tagaytay	1,500 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-36905)	P 3,701,810.00
AM-ML-225	Greenbreze Subd., Lancaan, Dasmariñas	200 m² residential lot (T-979115)	P 195,000.00
LAGUNA			
STR-02	Lot 1 Pcs-31598, unnamed road, Mercado Village, Pulong Sta. Cruz, Sta. Rosa	2,150 m² vacant commercial-residential lot (TCT No. T-385520)	P 32,250,000.00
AM-ML-226	Along Bonifacio St., Bgy. Sto. Niño Poblacion, Lumban	97 m² residential lot (TCT No. 200189) w/ 4-storey factory bldg.	P 1,733,000.00
AM-ML-227	L-23 B-2, San Pablo St., San Carlos Bgy. Village, Banay-banay, Cabuyao	66 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-536564) w/ bldg.	P 267,300.00
MISAMIS ORIENTAL			
CWB-035	Bo. Barra, Opol	35,046 m² institutional lot (TCT No. 37481) w/school bldgs. & imprvts., office eqpt. & furnitures	P 44,772,200.00
QUEZON			
AM-CP-228	Bgy. Cabuguang, Tagkawayan	2 adjoining lots (TCT Nos. T-367909 & 367910) total area of 408,846 m²	P 6,513,525.00
RIZAL			
AM-PY-229	Lincoln Drive, Mayamot, Antipolo City	8 industrial lots (TCT Nos. 317013 to 317020), total area of 5,029 m² w/ bldg.	P 5,557,090.00
AM-PY-230	Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo City	2 adjoining lots (TCT Nos. 373101 & 373102), total area of 2,537 m²	P 887,460.00
AM-PY-231	Bermudez Heights Subd., Bgy. San Isidro & Ibayo, Antipolo City	Subdivision Lots: TCT No. 403152 336 m² 403153 337 m² 403154 300 m² 403155 227 m² 403156 322 m² 403157 287 m²	 P 403,200.00 P 404,400.00 P 360,000.00 P 332,400.00 P 386,400.00 P 344,400.00
ZAMBALES			
AM-ED-232	Bo. Lucapon, Sta. Cruz	6,639 m² agro-residential lot (TCT No. 48082)	P 1,619,775.00
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AM-MC-233	No. 2337 Dalaga St., Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila	Punch press, 7-mixers & material handling eqpt.	P 40,000.00 to 8,000,000.00
CWB-029	Bldg. 693 Gridley St., SRF Compound Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	Various machinery and equipment for food processing	P 11,000.00 to 6,675,000.00
AM-ML-234a	) Serg's Compound, Ortigas Avenue,) Pasig City	1-unit Hydrostatic Five-Roll Refiner, for chocolate masses, cream compds.	P 5,146,900.00
AM-ML-234b	)	1-lot Baker Perkins Chocolate Machine	P 913,100.00
AM-JA-235	No. 6 Banner St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City	Shrinking machine and 2-hydraulic press	P 15,000.00 to 1,000,000.00
AM-ED-236	No. 617 Bagumbayan St., Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila	Offset press/setting/letter press machines	P 12,500.00 to 375,000.00
AM-ML-237	DBP Depot, Dona Severina, Parañaque City	Electric heating upsetter, welding machine, 2-nut tapping machine	P 8,400.00 to 249,440.00
AM-MC-238	L-3 B-5, Purok 4, Magsaysay, San Pedro, Laguna	Various chattels for molds and dies fabrication	P 60,000.00 to 236,200.00
AM-JA-239	Bgy. San Isidro, Minalin, Pampanga	Generating set, powder coating oven, shearing machine, hydraulic/power press	P 16,900.00 to 200,000.00
AM-JA-240	Along National Road, San Rafael, Sto. Tomas, Batangas	Pressure tank, 675 gal. cap	P 21,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2218/2252 for Code starting with AM; 926-1686 for CWB; 818-9511 local 1409 for MALO and 1428 for STR.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI - Aug. 16 & 17, 2004)

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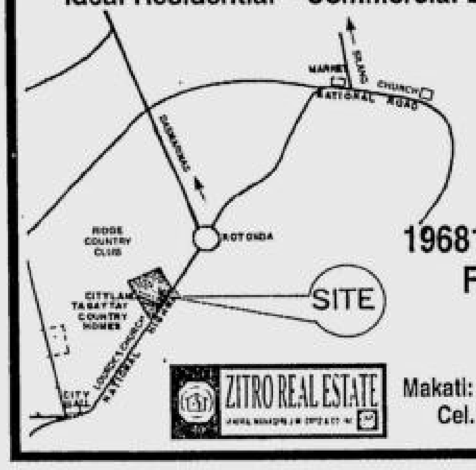

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ROOM & BOARD

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office
San Francisco, Agusan del Sur

NOTICE OF COVERAGE AND FIELD INVESTIGATION

Pursuant to Section 7 of R.A. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, landowners, listed below with their landholdings and location are hereby notified that their landholdings are now covered under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program

	LANDOWNER	LOCATION	TITLE NO.	LOT NO.	AREA	DATE OCCULAR INSPECTION
1.	TERESITA BRIONES	MABUHAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-2277) 1316	817, PLS-224	8.3279	9/13/4
2.	FRANCISCO BRIONES	MABUHAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-3444	829, PLS-224	7.7083	9/13/4
3.	PAULINA JAPSON	TAGUBAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-3699)-P-2350	771, PLS-224	11.6816	9/14/4
4.	JOSEFINA & SATURNINO BALDUMAR	TAGUBAY, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-2412	818, PLS-224	7.3453	9/14/4
5.	QUEZON GAMIAO	ILIHAN, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-495	205, PLS-223	7.9621	9/14/4
6.	SUSANO LUMASAG	ILIHAN, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-716	122, PLS-223	7.6049	9/14/4
7.	MARCIANO GAQUIT	GAMAO, BAYUGAN, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(P-6793) P-4901	1099, PLS-225	8.0866	9/15/4
8.	REY MONTALBAN	POBLACION, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-4395	65, PLS-223	7.6496	9/15/4
9.	MARGARITO CUTAMORA	EL RIO, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-2186	126, GSS-840	5.3902	9/15/4
10.	NENA MARUGA	ZILLOVIA, TALACOGON, AGUSAN DEL SUR	T-11082	324, PLS-750	8.2769	9/16/4
11.	FULGENCIO CASAS	MAHAYAHAY, SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	(T-226) 160	2, PLS-223	9.4106	9/16/4
12.	SIMPLICIO BALIGWAT	TABON-TABON SIBAGAT, AGUSAN DEL SUR	P-2108	189, GSS-840	6.6885	9/16/4
13.	DBP	SAN TORIBIO, ESPERANZA AGUSAN, DEL SUR	T-4010	1464, PLS-443	23.9985	9/17/4
	TOTAL				120.1322	

In this connection may we invite the landowners or their authorized representatives to a field investigation to be conducted on the date indicated herein. During the investigation, landholders may choose or pinpoint their retained area in accordance with Section 6 of R.A. 6657, which area should be more or less contiguous. Failure to attend said meeting or to choose retained area will mean that the office is given the discretion to identify the same.

Landowners are also advised to bring Statement of Production and Net Income on the said landholdings to be used as input in the determination of the land value.

Under Executive Order No. 405, dated 14 June 1990, we shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to determine the land value of the said properties being acquired pursuant to Section 17 of R.A. 6657. As soon as we receive the Memorandum of Valuation from the LBP, we shall advise the landowners of the computed land value of the properties.

(Sgd.) FE B. MERCADO
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI--Aug. 9, 16 & 23, 2004)

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CAR LOAN

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

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Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires maybe. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

Persons must pray this 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be.

Promise to publish this soon as your favor has been granted. Thank you Holy Spirit for granting my petition. - LCB

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In endless loving memory on the
14th Death Anniversary of

DR. BENJAMIN H. FELIPE M.D.

Who died on August 16, 1990

Masses will be said on the ff. churches today, August 16.

1) **Our Lady of Mt. Carmel**, *Doña J. Rodriguez, Q.C.* ..... *6:00 p.m.*
2) **Immaculate Conception Cathedral**, *Cubao, Q.C.* ..... *6:00 p.m.*
3) **Christ the King Seminary**, *E. Rodriguez, Q.C.* .... *6:00 p.m.*
4) **Sacred heart Parish Church**, *Kamuning Q.C.* .... *6:00 p.m.*
5) **St. Joseph's Convent**, *Hemady St., New Manila, Q.C.* .... *6:00 a.m.*

His loving wife **Charito**; children **Ben Jr.**, **Marinel** & **Timmy Robertson** and **Manny** request their relatives & friends to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"My soul finds rest in God alone; My salvation comes from Him; He alone is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be forsaken."
Psalm 62:1

LUCIA GRUENBERG LEGASPI

Peacefully joined her Creator on August 14, 2004 at the age of 82.

Her bereaved children **Betty**, **Ernie**, **Antonia**, **Tess**, **Corito** and **Teena**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Narra Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass on August 18, 2004.

Lualhati Aldaba Cojuangco

Peacefully joined her Creator on
August 13, 2004 at the age of 94.

Loving wife of **Don Juan Cojuangco**; sister to **Juan** and beloved Ate to **Dalisay**, **Amadito**, **Estefania**, **Enrique**, **Diwata**, **Homobono**, **Jaime**, **Benjamin** and **Rodolfo.**

Her family and friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio, Makati City.

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ANTONIO GONZALEZ NAZARENO

Chairman, LAKAS-CMD, City of Cavite
Vice Mayor of the City of Cavite
Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus-Council of St. Peter
Chairman, Cofradia de la Soledad de Porta Vaga
St. Jean Baptiste De La Salle Medal Awardee
Devoted Son and Loving Father

TONY passed away on 14 August 2004. His body will lie in state at the La Salle Green Hills Chapel at Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong until the morning of Wednesday, 18 August 2004, when his remains shall be transferred to the Cavite City Hall at Samonte Park, Cavite City where he shall be accorded full Necrological Rites by the City Government of Cavite. Thereafter, his remains will be transferred to his residence, "Bayside", at 883 Manila-Cavite Boulevard, Dalahican, Cavite City, Cavite where these will lie in state until the morning of Saturday, 21 August 2004, when his remains will be transferred to St. Peter's Church in Cavite City for a Funeral Mass which shall commence at 8:30 in the morning. Immediately after the Funeral Mass, Tony's remains shall be buried at the Gonzalez-Nazareno Mausoleum at the Cavite City Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, his family requests that donations be made in Tony's name to the Knights of Columbus and/or to the Cofradia de la Soledad de Porta Vaga.

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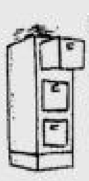
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AD NO. 2004-024

PD Ref. No.: PB-040415-LE0051 / PR No.: GSD-04-006462

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION(Transco), BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) - HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility that are not currently National Power Corporation (NPC)/TransCo Contractor for Security Services who are:
    - a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; OR
    - b. Partnerships duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; OR
    - c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; OR
    - d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract, Provided, however, That Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); OR
    - e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperatives Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of:
    - SCHEDULE I - TWO (2) YEAR CONTRACT TO COVER ALL REQUIREMENT FOR THE WORKS CLEANLINESS AND SANITATION OF TRANSCO MAIN BUILDING, POWER TRAINING CENTER AND PREMISES INCLUDING INDOOR PLANTS/LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE OF TRANSCO MAIN BUILDING, POWER TRAINING CENTER AND TRANSCO BUILDINGS 2 AND 3 (NCC & SO) AND OTHER SERVICES RELATED TO HOUSEKEEPING AND UTILITY WORKS.
    - SCHEDULE II - TWO (2) YEAR CONTRACT TO COVER ALL REQUIREMENT FOR THE WORKS CLEANLINESS AND SANITATION TRANSCO BUILDINGS 2 AND 3 (NCC & SO) AND PREMISES INCLUDING ALLIED MANPOWER SERVICES OF TRANSCO MAIN BUILDING, POWER TRAINING CENTER, AND BUILDINGS 2 & 3 AND OTHER SERVICES RELATED TO HOUSEKEEPING AND UTILITY WORKS.
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder is specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents to be issued to prospective bidders.

    The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be bid for Schedule I is *P10,000,000.00* and for Schedule II is *P10,000,000.00* from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting **August 16, 2004 to September 13, 2004** at the BAC Secretariat Office, National Transmission Corporation, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of **THREE THOUSAND Pesos (P3,000.00)** per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **September 01, 2004, 3:00 PM** at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Building, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before **1:30 pm on September 15, 2004** at the Admin Conference room, G/F TransCo Main Building, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI – August 16 & 30, 2004)

PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO BID

The PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY (PEA) is inviting interested parties to participate in the public bidding for the sale or lease of eleven (11) lots on a serviced land basis, located at the Central Business Park 1 A, Bay City (formerly known as Boulevard 2000), Pasay City, for mixed use or commercial development purposes.

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A2	3	interior	2,611	SALE
A2	4	interior	2,573	SALE
A2	5	corner	3,321	SALE
A3	1	corner	2,500	SALE
A3	2	interior	2,222	SALE
B4		portion	5,825	SALE OR LEASE
B7		portion	4,648	SALE OR LEASE
B5		whole	18,348	SALE OR LEASE

[1] Subject to final survey

2. Qualified bidders
    - Sale: Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any government owned or controlled corporations and any government financial institution or any public corporation, which have complied with the requirements established by PEA for this bidding.
    - Lease: Any Filipino citizen, of legal age; any partnership, association or corporation, public or private of which at least 60% of the capital stock or of any interest in said capital stock belongs wholly to citizens of the Philippines and which is organized and constituted under the laws of the Philippines.
3. Interested qualified parties may obtain the Terms of Reference and Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (P5,000.00) in cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check starting 12 August until 8 September 2004 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the Marketing Department, 7th Floor Legaspi Towers 200, Paseo de Roxas, Makati MM.
4. Required pre-qualification documents and duly accomplished Bid Documents prescribed in the Terms of Reference shall be submitted to the PEA Real Estates Bid and Awards Committee (PREBAC) on 22 September 2004 on or before 1:00 PM. Public opening of bids shall follow at 1:30 PM, of the same day.
5. For further information, inquiries may be made to the Marketing Department in the above address at telephone number 817-4711 to 13 (trunk line) and 813-7103 to 7104 (direct lines).

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI – Aug. 11, 16, 21, 26, Sept. 2 & 6, 2004)

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Payatas youth start virtual classes

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE SANDIWAAN Center for Learning in Payatas has begun developing an electronic learning course for the country's out-of-school youth.

The project entails digitizing learning modules from the Department of Education (DepEd), training teachers from the Philippine Society of Christian Education and donations of second-hand computers from Filipino societies abroad.

The project will have a pilot test by December this year and, hopefully, be deployed in Metro Manila early next year.

By the end of 2005, Sandiwaan expects to teach more than 70,000 out-of-school youth through their e-learning project.

Sandiwaan director Fr. Benigno Beltran, SVD, said they have acquired several dozen computers from Filipino societies in the United States and Germany.

"We are in talks with other groups to give us second-hand PCs," he said.

Father Beltran explained that their e-learning program only requires a minimum system set up to run Dreamweaver Flash, a multimedia application that is becoming a popular choice among e-learning developers.

Father Beltran also said they have received donations to start up the project as well as some financial assistance from the former Information Technology and E-Commerce Council, now called the Commission on Information and Communications Technology.

The modules will be delivered via application service provider model where the modules can be accessed online via the Internet.

Sandiwaan will use 147 digitized learning modules from the DepEd's Bureau of Non-Formal Education (BNFE).

Benigno said they tapped a Filipino group from the Michigan State University to digitize the BNFE modules.

Most of the BNFE modules are similar to the courses used by regular high schools but are designed for easy learning for out-of-school youths and special people.

Among the courses include basic to advanced English and reading comprehension, math, science, social studies and history. It usually takes two to three years to finish all the basic learning modules.

Like students who take the BNFE in traditional manner, students of Sandiwaan's project will also receive a diploma equivalent to that of a high school graduate.

"That diploma will help them in moving on to college or any vocational course. They can pursue their dreams of having a better life that they deserve," Beltran said.

E-learning can fuel economic growth

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

THE ASIAN Development Bank (ADB) is pushing for the use of e-learning in developing Asian countries.

ADB vice president Geert van der Linden said using electronic methods to deliver education can provide a cost-effective solution to fill the geographical gap that is common among underdeveloped and developing countries.

"If properly harnessed, e-learning could be the fuel that propels Asia's economies to new heights in the years to come," van der Linden said at the International Workshop on Improving E-Learning Policies and Programs held at ADB's Manila headquarters.

Van der Linden noted that e-learning can help people in rural areas access world-class education without having to leave their communities.

The four-day workshop is organized by the Tokyo-based Asian Development Bank Institute and is being conducted in collaboration with the Governments of Australia and the Republic of Korea, ADB, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, IBM, Microsoft and ComTIA.

Van der Linden noted that educational systems in many developing countries are not able to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the increasingly sophisticated global workforce, thus increasing the digital divide in education and in the labor force.

He stressed that countries need to add value to their workforce through education if it wants to develop its human resource.

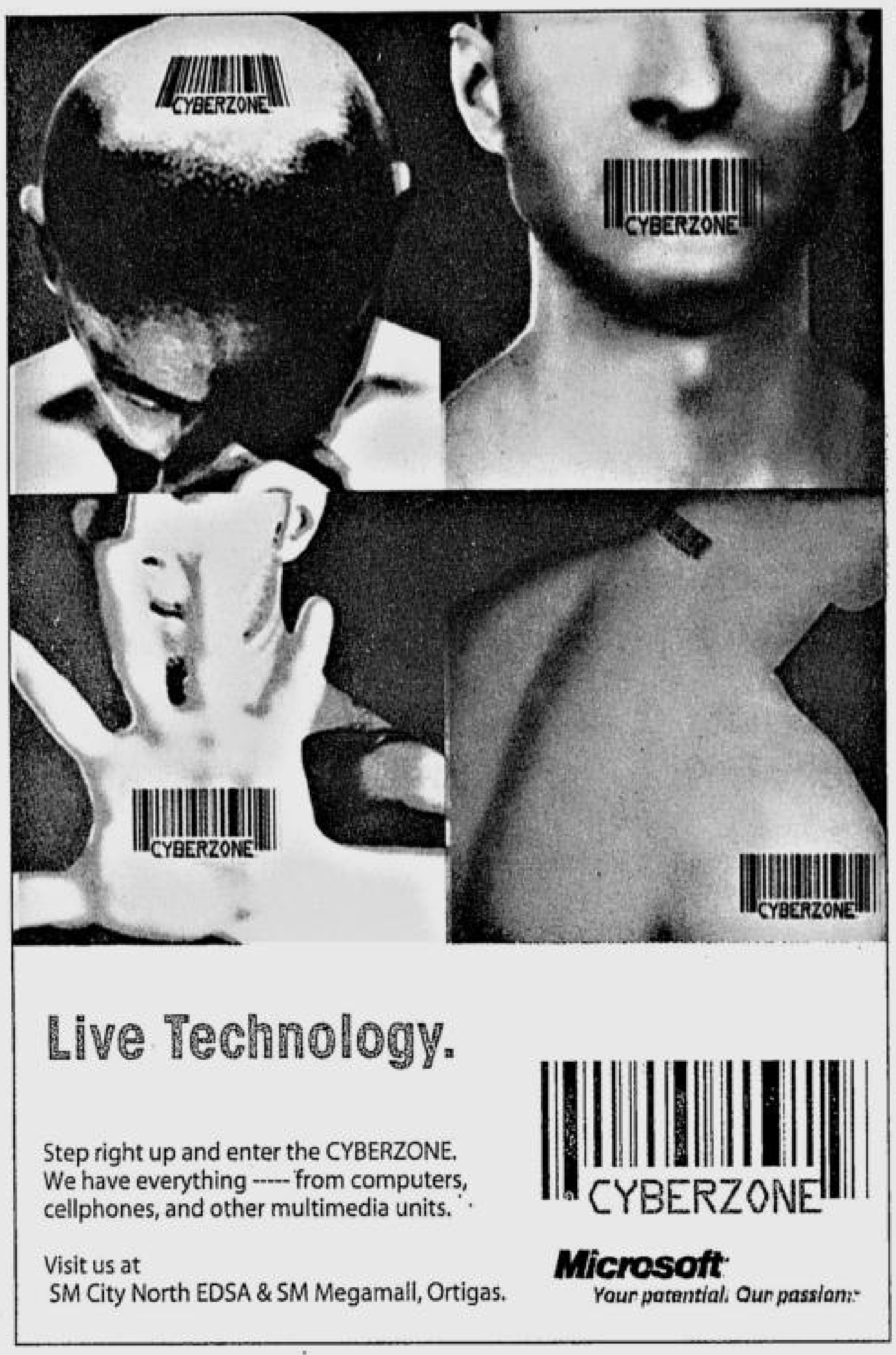
Raymond Renfro, Capacity Building and Training Director for ADBI, said that e-learning offers flexibility in terms of learning pace and content delivery.

Renfro also stressed the cost-effectiveness of e-learning over traditional methods since it can reach out to people in far flung areas who could not avail of attending class in another school away from their community.

China, India, Fiji and the Pacific Islands, Mongolia and Sri Lanka already use e-learning to educate farmers, community leaders, government workers and students in far-flung areas.

Meanwhile, in the Philippines, e-learning is still relegated to basic school functions, though there are plans of extending it to train farmers and small-to-medium scale businesses.

Representatives from 19 developing member countries attended the ADB workshop. It is trying to identify the policies needed to promote e-learning in Asian developing countries that are falling behind in terms of computer and Internet use.



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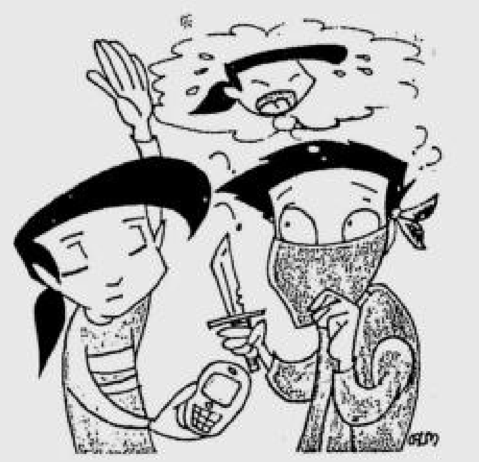
Company starts offering mobile phone insurance

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor



NOW even mobile phones can be insured.

EStandard Insurance Corp. has started offering Asia's first mobile phone insurance service called Txt2Protect.

The service works like a regular car or house insurance policy wherein a policy holder can claim a replacement unit of the same phone model.

This kind of service is available in the United Kingdom where new mobile phones are being insured.

Jeralin Combalicer, vice president for marketing development for eStandard, said the service covers stolen phones and accidental damages to a unit. Moreover, she said the company covers all mobile phone brands and models that are available in the market.

"We replace stolen and accidentally damaged units. If a unit has been phased out in the market, the next closest model to that unit will be the one given to the owner," Combalicer said.

She also said a replacement unit can be claimed three to five days after filing a report.

Combalicer cited a report by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) that showed more than 17,000 incidents of phone theft in the Philippines.

To use the service, an owner has to apply through text message by sending the model number and brand to 2333 for Globe and Touch Mobile or 283 for Smart and Talk&Text. Afterwards, the owner completes an application form at Equitable-PCI, Metrobank and Standard Insurance branches nationwide.

The owner has to indicate the International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) in the application since this will be used to track down the stolen unit.

The service automatically activates once the owner pays the annual premium, which depends on the phone model being insured. The premium ranges from P245 for a basic model such as a Nokia 3310, to P3,000 for a Sony Ericsson P900, one of the most expensive mobile phones in the market.

To prevent fraud among claimants, Combalicer said they have measures that will establish the viability of the claim. These include filing a police report and being interviewed by an insurance agent.

"This kind of service can be subject to fraud. There are users who want to just replace their units and feign theft. On the other hand, we see there's a need for users to have their phones insured," Combalicer said.

Gov't mulls 'people's PC'

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

PHILIPPINE government is looking at copying Thailand's "PC for the people" program, one which packages affordable computers for the public.

The Philippine plan will, however, focus on providing affordable computers to public high schools than to all Filipinos, according to Virgilio Peña, chair of the Commission on Information and Communications Technology (CICT).

The Thai government's program managed to bring the cost of a PC down to about 10,000 baht. Peña, however, noted that this price only covers hardware.

The Thai government recently signed a partnership with Microsoft Corp. to enable it to slash Microsoft software prices, he said.

Peña disclosed he is currently in discussions with technology vendors like Intel Corp. to find ways of slashing the price of computers.

"I'm talking to Intel on a possible low-cost computer similar to what Thailand had done," Peña said.

He said that the Philippine government is looking at offering P15,000 computer for public schools.

Peña was, however, unclear whether government will use open source software.

Peña said the CICT will also talk to local carriers on providing more affordable connectivity to public schools.

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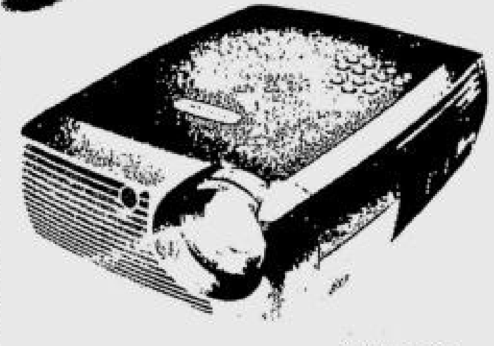

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- The Philippine Information Technology General Certification Exam (Phil IT-GCE)
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- The Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA) Certifications
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- Developing Cutting Edge Solutions
- Becoming a Quality Project Manager

Day 2 Wednesday September 22 2004

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CALCULATED RISKS

Overcoming start-up venture jitters

By Ian Jester M. de Vera
Contributor, UP ISSI

PEOPLE have 101 reasons to want to start a business. To make money, be their own boss, express their creativity, help others by providing them jobs. Whatever their motivations are, it is inevitable for a new entrepreneur to experience fear. Fear of the unknown.

There are nagging uncertainties. Will my business succeed? Will I have funds for my business? Will I be able to pay back my loans? Will I be able to recover my investments?

If you are afraid to take the entrepreneurial plunge, you might reconsider now. It is the preferred option for many of the unemployed, the retired, even the employed.

If you are unemployed you might consider starting a business rather than queue up for employment. Of the 759,000 new jobs created each year, only 51,000 are professional and executive positions. It is a tight job market for the 400,000 college graduates yearly. If you are an undergraduate, how much more difficult would it be for you to find a job.

Even the employed think of starting their business as a sideline or a fallback. Think of spiraling inflation and frozen salaries. Think of the possibility of mergers, layoffs and retrenchment moves of employers.

The retired may also have a business in mind in order to keep themselves productive and augment their meager pension pay.

Dispel doubts

Perhaps, you have convinced yourself that entrepreneurship is the way to go. How then do you shoo away the butterflies from your stomach? How do you stop worrying over the risks?

The risk an entrepreneur takes is not a haphazard one. Risk taking by entrepreneurs is not hit or miss. It is not gambling.

This risk is a calculated one. Calculating the risks before embarking on self-employment will minimize, if not dispel, the uncertainties associated with starting a business.

Will my business succeed?

It is the nature of small businesses to be prone to failure. In a fast-growing industry a small firm may neither have the financial capability nor the organizational capacity to respond adequately to new opportunities and their corresponding challenges. On the other hand, the firm may face cash flow problems in a snail-paced industry.

In either case, the success of the business will partly depend on how it will respond to the industry. Factors like capital requirement, workforce and cash flow must be planned well before actually starting.

Will I have funds for my business?

Fund sourcing may be formal or informal.

The small entrepreneur usually meets startup requirements by dipping into his own pocket or investing the other assets. Loans from relatives and friends may supplement this initial capital. Sometimes these are interest-free. These are the informal source.

But there is also what is called the formal source. Lending money is the business of many companies like banks, savings and loans associations, and venture capital corporations. The government also extends loans especially to small and medium enterprises through credit institutions like the Development Bank of the Philippines and the Small Business Corp., usually at subsidized interest rates and liberal terms.

Take note, however, that these formal sources of funds will first examine how well you planned your business. Expect to be asked about your business plan. Expect also a thorough credit investigation and appraisal of your securities. Banks will only bank on the bankable.

Will I be able to pay back my loans?

There are rules of sound financing that are useful as you perform your job as financial manager of your firm.

For example, long-term requirements like fixed assets and working capital during normal operations must be financed from long-term sources, and short-term requirements like additional working capital needed during peak season must come from short-term sources.

You should have a forecast which outlines all these capital requirements. You should also be able to anticipate heavy expenditures from big-volume orders during peak periods like the holidays and school openings.

These buying phenomena will greatly affect your cash flow and in turn your ability to pay back your loans. Don't be caught off guard.

Will I be able to recover investments?

It is the exceptional entrepreneur who made it big overnight. Success is often the result of hard work, resourcefulness, commitment and "stick-to-it-iveness."

Your initial sweat and tears may be rewarded initially with very modest gains. Don't lose heart. The market is usually slow to build up. Patience is the entrepreneur's virtue.

Counteracting jitters

It is the fear of the unknown that makes the aspiring entrepreneur shiver. But it is fear that can be overcome by having advance knowledge of the situation. This is where the business plan is useful. It is an "abacus" on which to calculate return on investment and break even points, among other things.

Of course, even the most carefully laid-out plans seldom turn out exactly according to plan. As everyone knows, the future has a way of springing surprises. But planning will give you more confidence in what you do and enable you to observe and exploit general trends and patterns in the marketplace.

(Preparing a business plan is one of the modules in the six-day seminar "Start Your Own Business" to be run by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries every Saturday from Aug. 21 to Sept. 25. For more details, call 9287076 to 79 or email at training.issi@up.edu.ph.)

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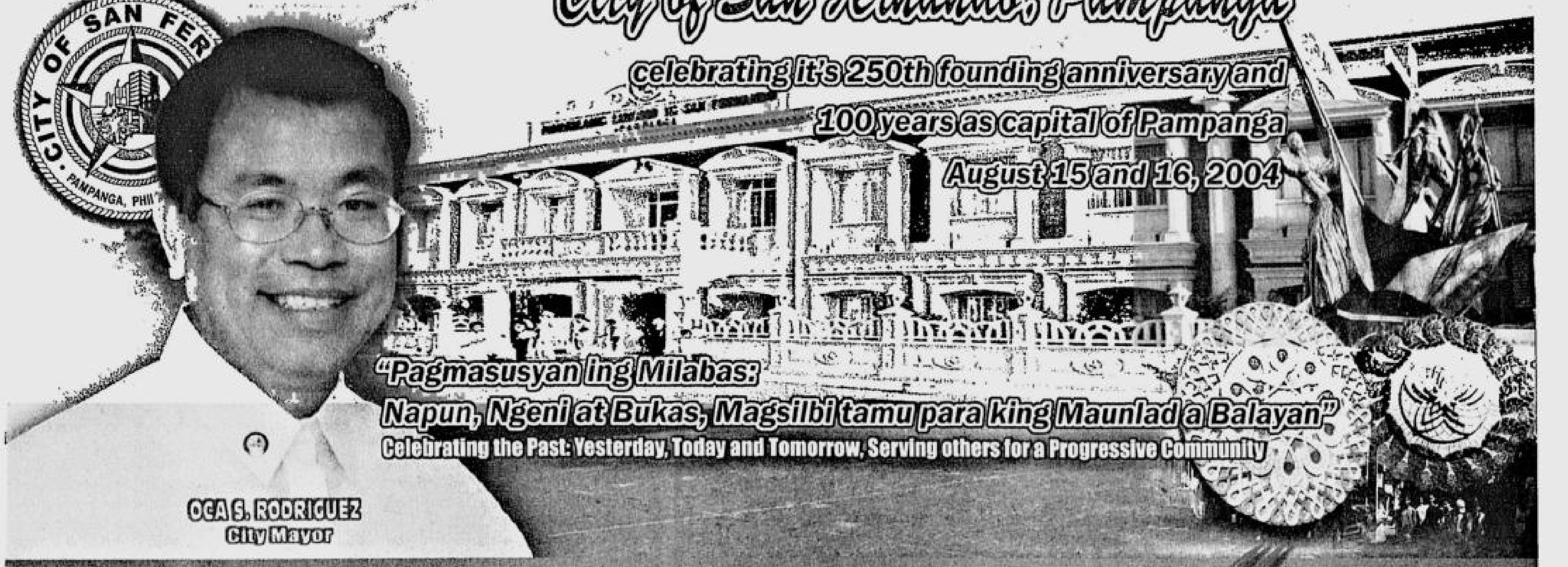
City of San Fernando, Pampanga

celebrating it's 250th founding anniversary and 100 years as capital of Pampanga

August 15 and 16, 2004


"Pagmasusyan ing Milabas:
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Celebrating the Past: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Serving others for a Progressive Community

OCA S. RODRIGUEZ
City Mayor

http://www.cityofsanfernando.gov.ph

On August 16, 1754, Governor-General Pedro Manuel de Arandia promulgated an orden del superior that established the town of San Fernando. It was named after Fernando VI who was king of Spain at the time it was created. Its titular patron is Fernando III who was canonized in 1671. After 150 years, on August 16, 1904, the provincial capital of Pampanga was transferred from Bacolor to San Fernando by virtue of Act No. 1204 issued at the instance of the provincial governor, Macario Arnedo.

The creation of the new town was triggered by the petition of Don Josef Bersosa on July 17, 1754, on behalf of the Augustinian cura parrocos of Bacolor and Mexico, namely Padre Lorenzo Barrela and Padre Alexandro Dominguez. In his petition, Bersosa cited that it was very hard for the two (2) priests to attend to the spiritual and temporal needs of their parishioners because of their number which was considerably high and the distance between the two (2) churches, which were three (3) leagues away from each other. Consequently, crimes occurred more frequently especially in the far flung areas. Given these scenarios, he argued that it was necessary to reduce the area of the 2 towns and create another town to be administered by a new priest. Its residents would also elect its own officials who will take charge of the police matters and the administration of justice.

Program of Activities

7:00 a.m.	Motorcade from the Municipality of Bacolor to the Pampanga Provincial Capitol	
7:30 a.m.	March from the Pampanga Provincial Capitol to the City Hall of San Fernando, Pampanga	
8:00 a.m.	Commemorative Program	
	Invocation	Msgr. Sonny M. Lumanog
	Philippine National Anthem	University of the Assumption Band
	Himno ning Kapampangan	Provincial Capitol Band
	Himno Fernandino	City of San Fernando Choir
	Turn-over rites	Hon. Mark T. Lapid Governor, Province of Pampanga Hon. Oscar S. Rodriguez City Mayor Hon. Romeo A. Dungca Municipal Mayor, Bacolor, Pampanga
	Welcome Remarks	Hon. Oscar S. Rodriguez
	Short Messages	Hon. Mark T. Lapid Government Officials
	Introduction of the Guest of Honor	Mr. Gerry Rodriguez
	Centenary Address	Bro. Andrew B. Gonzalez, FSC

Awarding of OFW Grocery Project
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Awarding of Certificates of Occupancy to Beneficiaries of OSFR Metrobank Housing Project
Job Fair for local and overseas employment with more than 30 companies participating
Exhibit of old photos of San Fernando

At the time of its creation, San Fernando had 600 taxpayers - 200 were from Bacolor and 400 from Mexico – to assure the necessary income for the cura parroco. Its first gobernadorcillo was Don Vidal de Arrozal who was elected in 1755. Padre Sebastian Moreno was named pro-vicar in 1756 of the new parish which was under the advocation of Our Lady of the Assumption.

Due to its strategic location, the new town developed very fast. Economy flourished as the population increased. In 1760 it already had 3,028 inhabitants. The population increased to 15,164 in 1896. Many businessmen settled in San Fernando. According to "Misiones Catolicas en el Extremo Oriente" as quoted in "Angels in Stone" by Fr. Pedro G. Galende, OSA, trading business in San Fernando flourished at that time that it was called the "second Parian or even the second Escolta of Manila due to the many Chinese established here."

The economic development in San Fernando inspired local leaders to start a move for the transfer of the provincial capital from Bacolor to San Fernando in the latter part of the 19th century. In an Expediente signed on August 6, 1852, the alcalde mayor proposed that the capital of Pampanga be transferred from Bacolor to San Fernando. The Spanish King granted the request through Real Cedula 745 dated September 11, 1881. This was not implemented, however, until in 1904 at the behest of Governor Arnedo, during the term of Juan Sengson as municipal president. In reviving the proposal, Arnedo cited the fact that San Fernando was the biggest and most strategic town of Pampanga along the vital Manila-Dagupan Railroad which slices through it and links the province to the entire island of Luzon. Bacolor, on the other hand, was bypassed by the railroad, hence, was no longer a convenient location for the provincial capital.

John A. Larkin sums this up in his book "The Pampangans" where he wrote: "... San Fernando came into existence only in the middle of the 18th century as a result of a Spanish administrative decision. The town had a few distinguishing events in its past and in 1904 was scarcely larger in population than Bacolor. But the Manila-Dagupan Railroad passed through San Fernando connecting it to both the capital city and the vast sugar regions in the northern part of the province and in Tarlac. Hence the town became an important transportation center for a population increasingly committed to commercial sugar culture and more desirous of contact with an urban marketplace and cosmopolitan setting."

In his annual report in 1905, Governor Arnedo narrated that the "changing of capital ... from Bacolor to San Fernando... was received and considered in the province in general as a sign of a new era of greatness and prosperity." He also explained that the physical transfer of offices did not cause great difficulties and expense since several neighboring municipalities had kindly offered help and provided men, carabaos and carts free of charge.

More than 200 years later, San Fernando became a component city of the province of Pampanga on February 4, 2001. The following year, it was adjudged Most Competitive City in the Philippines (Small Size Category) by the Asian Institute of Management. In 2002, it was classified as Medium Size Category joining the ranks of older cities, including Angeles City. On the same year, it was declared Second Most Competitive Medium Size City in the Philippines besting other cities which are much older than it is.

All these developments can be attributed to the natural love of the Fernandinos for their heritage and their inate willingness to work together for progress.

by Ivan Henares & Fer Santos

MAGSILBI TAMU!

Messages

I convey my warm greetings and felicitations to the people and local officials of the City of San Fernando on the celebration of your 250th Foundation Anniversary and Centennial as Provincial Capital of Pampanga.

This festive and proud day for your locality is a tribute to the men and women whose perseverance and determination helped shape the City to its present stature. The role that San Fernando has played in our history as well as the sons and daughters that it has bestowed upon our motherland will forever be remembered as an integral part of our common heritage as a people. So too, will we remember your commitment to pursue sustainable development for the people of San Fernando and Pampanga.

Indeed, 100 years of being the seat of the provincial government is remarkable. As we implement our 10-pt agenda in the coming years, I count on San Fernando to lead our local governments in exemplifying the brand of good governance needed in order to attain our targets. May this celebration tighten your bond as a people and strengthen your faith in God. Again, congratulations on this milestone and *Mabuhay kayong Lahat!*

H.E. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO (Sgd.)
President
Republic of the Philippines

My warmest salutations to the local officials and people of the City of San Fernando, Pampanga as you observe the 250th Anniversary of its creation as a town and the centennial of its transfer as provincial capitol from Bacolor to its City.

Truly, the commemoration of these twin milestones is a cause for celebration as it allows us to rediscover our glorious past and, the same time, help us look ahead and prepare for the future.

Fernandinos should be proud as their community has come a long way from a rural town to a progressive city. I enjoin the people to remain united and strive harder for the city's continued prosperity and success.

Mabuhay ang mga Fernandinos!

Hon. MARK T. LAPID (Sgd.)
Governor,
Province of Pampanga

It is with great pride and honor that I greet my kabalen – Fernandinos from every point of the world – on this very important milestone in the history of the City of San Fernando, Pampanga, the 250th Founding Anniversary of San Fernando and the Centennial Transfer of Capital from Bacolor to San Fernando.

Gone were the days when we treaded the paths of war-torn roads, fought for freedom from all forms of oppression, fled from devastating calamities and struggled to establish our own little successes. These days have long left us yet we, in our own worlds, commemorate such events either with the intensity of a fiesta or just a quiet celebration for the sake of commemorating. The past's complete picture is a testament that we are in the present and moving on to a future uncharted but planned, thanks to history's lessons.

Where does history lead us, hence, but the future? A vast option of dreams await us for the fulfilling. We either take them for granted or water them to grow into something more than even our ancestors have never expected. The past are our lecture notes and the present our workbook. Our efforts would determine our future

It has been 250 years since San Fernando was founded as a town district, independent from all other towns with its own heritage and culture, economy and politics. Within this time frame, our history and culture have taken their own identity and we have reaped numerous blessings, victories, defeats, tragedies and successes that shaped the Fernandino into a well-rounded Filipino.

Today, let us all stand up and move on to the future of our choosing while we remember those who struggled before us to make our present a livable one. Let us unite and serve each other with a strong commitment and dedication for the betterment of our lives. While we look back, let us move on and serve with the best of our intentions for others and our abilities on the line. **MAGSILBI TAMU!**

Luid ya ing Fernandino, luid ya ing Kapampangan!

Hon. OSCAR S. RODRIGUEZ (Sgd.)
City Mayor

It is with great pride and honor that I warmly convey my felicitations to the City of San Fernando as it celebrates its 250th Founding Anniversary and the Centennial transfer of the Provincial Capitol from Bacolor to San Fernando City on August 15 and 16, 2004.

These occasions are truly important as they commemorate our people's commitment to development and growth. These significant events relive the struggle that our people in San Fernando had to overcome in order to make San Fernando City what it is now. These events are the indelible memoir of a life long legacy to effective and efficient governance.

San Fernando City is progressively evolving. From a quiet town it has grown to become a busy city busting with financial and economic activities. I have personally witnessed how progress kept changing the city for the better. This is largely due to the leaders' dedication to deliver good governance and people's unwavering demonstration of support.

I am proud to see the efforts that the officials and the people have contributed in order to uphold and practice good governance in San Fernando City and for the City Government's drive to inculcate it in the young minds of our children who will be the future leaders of this City.

Again, I warmly congratulate you all and may you have a blessed celebration.

Hon. JUAN MIGUEL MACAPAGAL-ARROYO (Sgd.)
Representative,
2nd District of Pampanga

Ipayabut ku pu kareng kekatamung kabalen king City of San Fernando ing mayap a oras!

As a Capampangan and as your province mate, it gives me great pride and honour to be part of the commemoration of the two significant events in the history of San Fernando: 250th year of its creation as a town and the centennial of its designation as the provincial capitol of our beloved province of Pampanga.

Its being situated at the heart of Pampanga as well as in the whole of Central Luzon makes San Fernando a fulcrum for growth & development. But more than its strategic location, it is the collective effort of its people that has led to its present position- a vibrant, and promising city.

San Fernando serves as a model and remains an engine for progress for the benefit of the whole province and the region. It is the wish and aspiration of every Fernandino and every Kapampangan like my self that the city realizes its full potentials.

Mabuhay ang City of San Fernando! Mabuhay ang Kapampangan!

Hon. ANNA YORK P. BONDOC, M.D. (Sgd.)
Representative,
4th District of Pampanga

As we celebrate the 250th founding anniversary and the centennial of the transfer of the capital of Pampanga from Bacolor to San Fernando, I would like to point out that by remembering the sacrifices made by the men and women who are instrumental in bringing San Fernando to greater heights and recognizing at what price they were won, we can better appreciate the freedom and progress that we have today. By remembering the sacrifices of our forbears, and carefully measuring our actions today, we help to ensure that we and our children will be able to continue living in a city that is progressive, peaceful and free.

The celebration's theme: **"Pagmasusian Ing Milabas, Napun, Ngeni at Bukas: Magsilbi Tamu Para King Maunlad A Balayan"** is not only a call to remember the city's rich history but a challenge for all of us to contribute to its progress.

We still have a long way to go and it will be hard climb uphill. I hope that just as you sympathized in the hard days, we also work hand in hand in the continuing journey to progress.

Hon. EDWIN D. SANTIAGO (Sgd.)
City Vice Mayor

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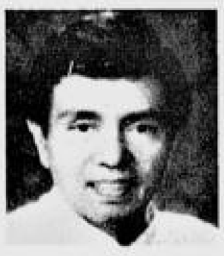

Manuel A. Alcuaz Jr.

THIS is what Nicolas Carr wrote in his "IT Doesn't Matter" article in the May 2003 Harvard Business Review. The article has stirred up a hornet's nest.

HP CEO Carly Fiorina called Carr "dead wrong" while Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer dismissed his essay as "hogwash."

IT skeptics did not go beyond the title and agreed that they were right all along in not investing in IT.

Actually, Carr never said that you should not invest in IT.

Carr argued that while IT was necessary for business survival, it no longer provided any strategic advantages. IT, like electricity, had become a simple factor of production and should be managed as such.

He argued that IT could no longer provide sustainable competitive advantage because IT is becoming standardized and applications are easily bought or copied by competitors.

Changing IT industry

At the Microsoft ISV Executive Day in Singapore on April 23, 2004, Puni Rajah, vice president for Research of IDC Asia/Pacific, said that the IT industry was changing and was undergoing a value shift.

From 1996-2000, the IT industry grew rapidly. There was overspending on IT. The IT spending in the industry was largely technology and supplier driven. IT skills (trained manpower) were in short supply.

Top management in major corporations and organizations came to realize that in many cases, they were not getting a good return on their millions of dollars invested in IT.

Between 2001 and 2003, the industry went into "Cost Control" and "Focus on Risk" mode.

IDC is, however, optimistic about the future.

Puni Rajah said that from 2004 to 2008, we will see: Focus on business value, Power shift to customers and Offshore BPO, Global Sourcing.

In contrast to the 1996-2000 period, that resulted in overspending in IT projects with little business value, IDC research in the coming years indicates that customers will be more active in choosing how to spend on IT. They will naturally focus more on business value, not purely on technology.

Opportunities in IT

Carr was mistaken in saying that the ready availability of standard IT technology and application packages, which can easily be bought and copied, would eliminate the opportunity to use IT for sustained competitiveness.

He seems to harbor the notion that spending a lot of money on proprietary hardware and software technologies and spending years in custom development of unique applications is the way to gain sustainable competitive advantage.

This approach to building competitive advantage costs too much and takes too long. It is one of the main reasons why many large corporations have overspent on IT and got a poor ROI.

A McKinsey study of 70 manufacturing firms published in the book, "Doing IT Smart," found that the best performing firms introduced proven integrated standard (application packages) software quickly, but redesigned their businesses first.

The same study showed that buying integrated standard software, such as SAP, was no guarantee of IT effectiveness and efficiency of IT. The applications have to be used to improve business processes.

Standard IT technologies and applications software create opportunities for business firms of all sizes to quickly implement cost-effective business solutions.

The competitive advantage is made possible through business and process transformation. Investing in technology and continuing to run antiquated processes do not maximize business benefits.

Making IT matter

To make IT matter, we must focus on "business value," not on technology.

Consider the following justifications for an ERP system:

Technology driven

- Integrated ERP, Browser Server Architecture, Oracle 9i Data Base Server, Linux Operating Environment, 64 Bit processor architecture, wireless network

Business Value Driven

- Fit between application functionality and business requirements; easy to use and learn; flexibility for future change and enhancement; capability to provide decision-driving information and enable process improvement

Being business value driven is not easy. Even within my own organization, some of our application consultants prefer the easy way out.

Normally, the mode is simply automating existing accounting functions, rather than the more difficult task of business innovation and process improvement (which is often resisted by the middle organizational levels who abhor change.)

To be more business value oriented, I have a simple rule. Start with "why," go through "what," and then determine "how."

You will note that the business value

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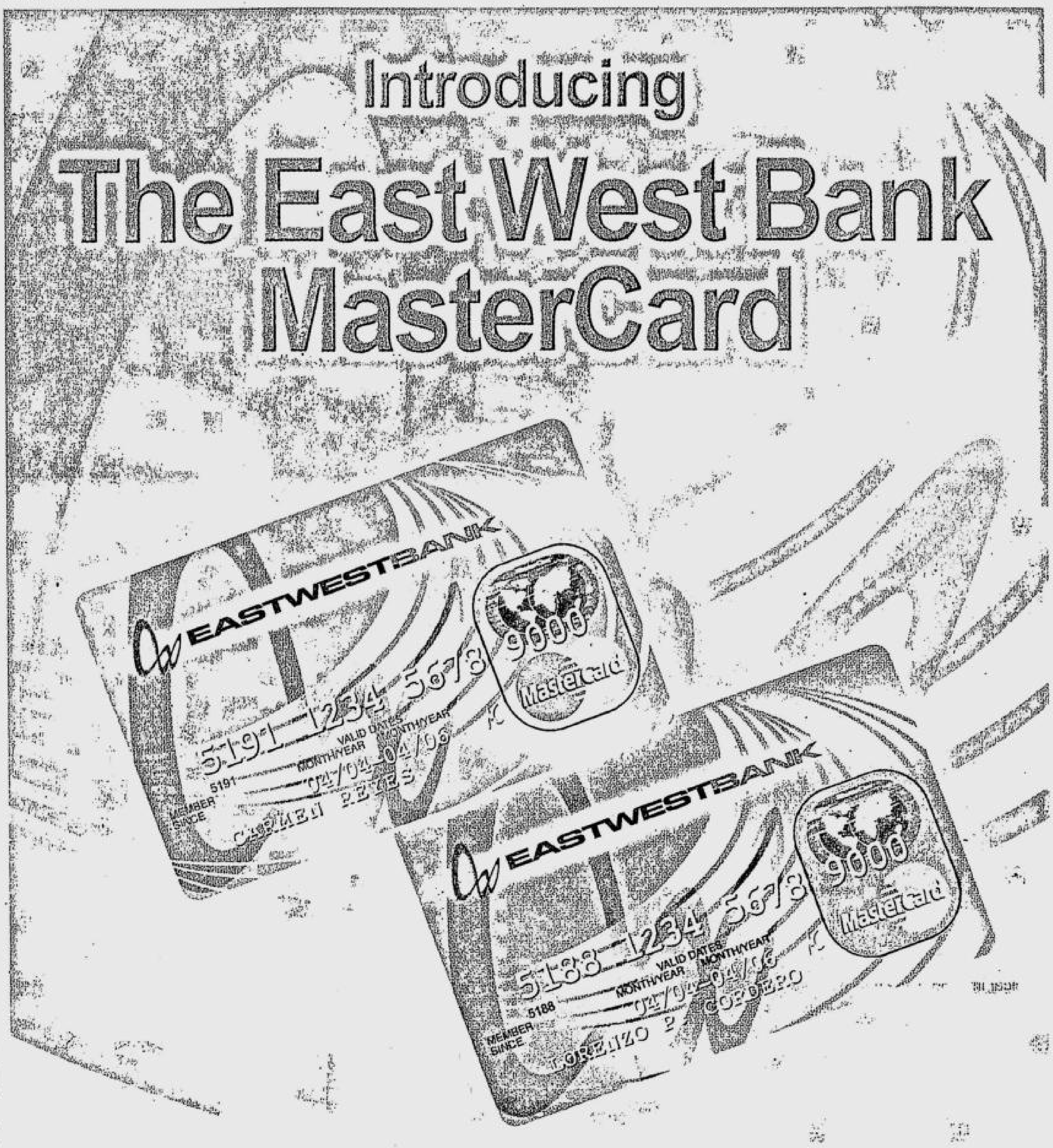

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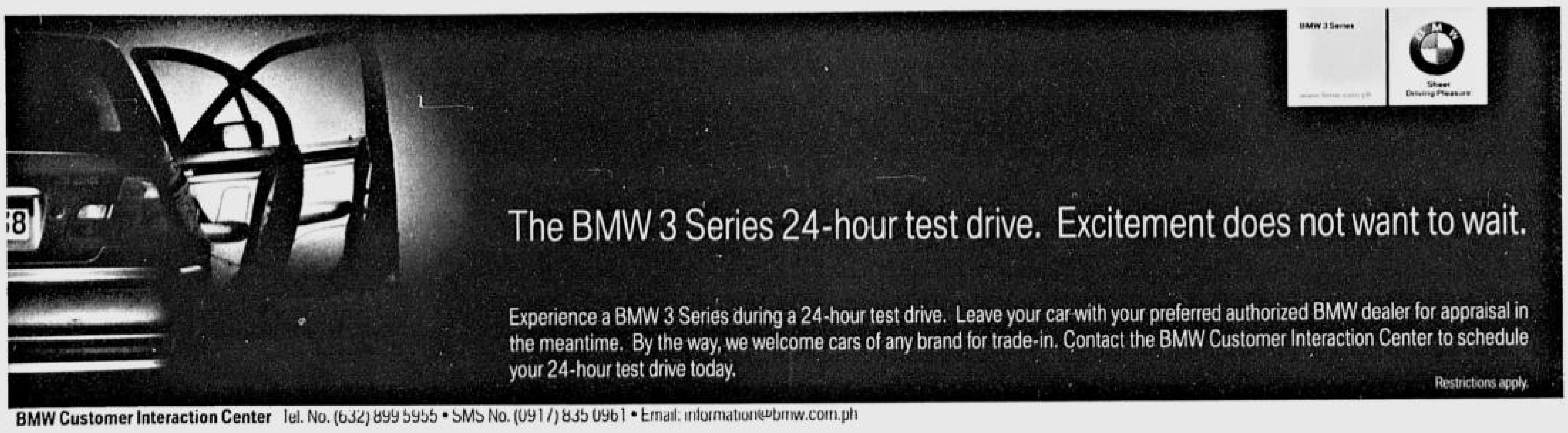

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Late bloomer in math figures way to the top

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

ELIZABETH A. Reyes thought that she was already living the easy life.

But her bubble burst when after working hard for 19 years, she realized that her secretary knew more about her children's school needs than she did.

Her husband suggested that, perhaps, she had moved up too much and it was time to slow down.

She was then VP for Group Insurance of Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. or Philamlife and was working 14 hours a day.

"My secretary became very good at taking care of my kids' homework. They would call asking for answers to certain questions and she would do the research. It was that bad, I felt so guilty," says the mom of three.

Care for the kids was left with her three or four maids.

She decided to get off the fast lane and made some drastic changes.

She quit her job in 1999 and gave full vent to her creative side. "I forced myself to do nothing. I worked out until it became an addiction. I had time to cook and bake. I had a complete set of baking equipment. I began to write again," she said.

But although she was semi-retired, work was still in her blood. Thus, she took on consultancy jobs but maintained her relatively slow work pace.

Things changed yet again after five years, when she took on the challenge to head the Healthway Medical Clinics, replacing Dr. John Evangelista who got a directorship post in a hospital in Britain.

Healthway is a chain of clinics in Manila that provides a variety of out patient services. Most the clinics are located in malls.

REYES now knows how to balance career and family.

REYES

She got the job through a head hunter who refused to allow her to retire and constantly threw opwork portunities her way.

"I'm a great believer in destiny. Opportunities come my way. I don't plan," says the forty-something executive.

She says it was a high school teacher who suggested that she take up Math in college, since she was good at it.

Reyes acted on the suggestion and took up BS Math at the University of the Philippines.

She breezed through all the Calculus and Applied Math subjects that eluded the understanding of most students.

Her first job after graduation was with Grepalife, the Yuchengco owned insurance firm.

Grepalife was then known as the breeding ground for actuaries, having produced the most number.

There are only a handful of actuaries in the country today—about 70.

Actuaries are hired by insurance firms to crunch numbers.

They do a lot of risk analysis, and determine how much premium the company should charge so that the company will meet maturing obligations and make a tidy profit as well.

She was determined to become an actuary and took all the tests to become one.

It usually takes three to four years to take and pass all the tests. It took Liza seven years.

"But I am still proud of that because in between taking the tests, I got married and had two kids," she said.

What is unique about Liza is that while she was immersed in numbers, she jumped at the opportunity to participate in the other side of the business, which was marketing.

The sales people at Grepalife used to complain that her calculations were too high, making it difficult for them to sell a product.

They invited her to join them on one of their out of town sales rallies, to give her a better feel of their work.

There, she saw how hard it was to sell and started toning down her calculations.

"I'm glad I went with them. I kept on going out of town with them until 1992, when I was asked to head the group insurance division," she said.

The group insurance division is tasked to sell insurance benefits to groups. This involves computing employee benefits and healthcare.

That experience will serve her well now as leader of Healthway.

She says it took only about two weeks from the time she was interviewed by Rolando Gosiengfiao for her to get the job.

The final interview was done in Hong Kong where she met the Chinese principals of GenRx Healthcare, the mother company of the chain of medical clinics here.

The concept of Healthway is to make healthcare available in non-hospital setting.

In the Philippines, the most frequented place of consumers is the mall, which is where most of its clinics are.

Liza says Gosiengfiao sold this concept to her, and after the interview, she was raring to start working.

"I want Healthway to someday be a household name when seeking medical attention. I want it to be easy to go to. I want doctors to scramble to go to Healthway—they don't have to go to expensive deals with hospitals," she says.

Although she is occupying the top post, Liza says life will no longer be the way it was five years ago, when she decided to retire.

"I know now how to balance. I can take care of my kids' homework and tests. My weekends are free," she says.

She initially thought of retiring at 50, "but with the new addition, this might change."

Liza is expecting a fourth child. And she learned about her pregnancy at a Healthway clinic, of course.

Does IT matter?

From page B2-3

driven example is responsive to "why", while the technology driven example jumps to "what" and "how." Many IT analysts don't seem to ask "why."

Discovering opportunities

We have seen companies like Amazon, Wal-Mart, Dell and countless others who have used IT for business reinvention and process transformation or improvement.

Amazon reinvented the business model for selling books. In contrast, Barnes, and Noble and Borders had to build thousands of stores to develop their US and worldwide markets.

Amazon's Jeff Bezos did it without a single store! He used computers, Web e-commerce software, and the Internet. Dell overcame its inability to penetrate computer retail store by leveraging its mail order business model on the Web and the Internet.

Wal-Mart uses IT to optimize its supply chain and provide its customers with quality goods at low prices.

Instead of receiving goods from vendors, stocking and storing goods in warehouses and subsequently picking goods and loading them on trucks that deliver goods to stores, Wal-Mart uses computers to schedule vendor deliveries so that they are unloaded into waiting delivery trucks.

There is a growing number of good and affordable applications which business firms of all sizes can use for business advantage.

Financial applications have been around the longest. They are getting better and are integrating forward into sales order processing and backwards into supply chain management with purchasing and inventory control.

Microsoft has recently introduced MS CRM Software for Sales and Service users at very attractive acquisition prices.

Aligning IT applications

While there are some common applications such as financials (GL and Reporting, Receivables, Payables, and Bank Reconciliation) and Human Resources and Payroll, the applications which bring in the revenues and provide competitive advantage are usually unique to your industry and business strategy.

I use two graphic tools: Ends-Means Trees, and Process and IT Mapping.

An Ends-Means Tree actually looks like a pyramid or inverted tree with the trunk on top.

I start by defining the highest level objectives of the firm or organization. Below the highest level objective, I define means to attain the objectives.

Take each of these means as sub-objectives (or Ends) and identify means to achieve them.

The means you identify will initially be strategic, then operational, and at the bottom, some of the means will be IT applications.

Process and IT Mapping starts by understanding the business process and breaking it down into process steps.

For each process step, you then identify the information that is a control, an input, support, or output of the process step.

It is surprising how this simple tool can help quickly identify important IT applications.

No change no benefits

There is a hierarchy of benefits that you can derive from IT.

Merely spending a lot of money on IT does not result in competitive advantage.

For simplicity, I use Michael Hammers' three step model of benefits and change—automate, inform and transform.

At the first step, we have mere automation. Your immediate probable benefit is clerical manpower reduction.

The second step involves the use of transaction information for analysis and decision-making for improved control and better management.

The ultimate step is where you transform the business or process. It is only when you transform that you get maximum benefit and competitive advantage.

For example, American Airlines would not have gained dramatic competitive advantage if it had kept its SABRE Reservations System in-house. "Need a reservation? Call us."

It gained competitive advantage by giving terminals to travel agents. Today, airlines are reaching out to travelers via the Internet.

IT can enable business transformation and/or process improvement, which in turn create competitive advantage. IT does matter.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is co-chair of the MAP ICT Committee and president of Systems Sciences Consult Inc. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

'Dream boss' wines, dines employees

By Marlet D. Salazar

PICTURE a chief executive officer lining up and dining with the other employees in the company's cafeteria.

Now, imagine a Malaysian CEO who signs e-mail sent to "all members of the LIRL community," as "your CEO."

Introducing Legenda International Resorts Ltd.'s Khoo Boo Boon, 45.

He is defined as anybody's dream boss who puts the employees' welfare side by side with the customers'.

It is, thus, no surprise that when Khoo took over LIRL two years ago, the company withstood all the crises that befell the economy and had never considered retrenchment.

"I consider all the employees my brothers and sisters," said Khoo, "whom I have to look after to."

But he also sees himself as a father who must lead them in the right direction, especially in loving their jobs and pursuing excellence in everything that they do.

Khoo also serves as an independent director on the board of Citiseconline.com, an online stock-brokerage with a seat at the Hong Kong Stock Exchange.

Khoo believes that involving and empowering the people would encourage them to do better in their jobs.

He never fails to let them feel that they are part of the LIRL family.

He is always in touch with the employees as he believes in his daily "management by walking about," wherein he observes the attitudes and characters of the people.

"I seldom fail to observe those who put their mind, heart, and soul in their work," said Khoo who graduated summa cum laude from the National University of Malaysia, with BA Honors degree in Political Science.

The unassuming Khoo defined "involvement" as getting employees to take part in some decisions as well as in the work of the organization.

"What do you think will happen if everyone who works for LIRL focused his or her brainpower on our biggest problem?" Khoo asked.

KHOO treats his employees as part of his family.

On the other hand, empowerment means working with the people to enable them to perform beyond simple rules which are "to act intelligently but not out of habit, routine, or fear."

"It is an act of development, a matter of helping employees feel an increased sense of control over their work, decisions, and environment," he added.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

Khoo's high regard for the interests of his subordinates and their families were translated into several benefits that he initiated.

He also believes that involving, empowering and nurturing the employees would translate to improving productivity and profits.

In achieving these systems, he undertook several changes to give people the chance to develop themselves.

Khoo, who also spent sometime teaching at the University of Malaysia, wants to share his insatiable appetite for reading, by donating books and setting up the company's own library.

According to him, "A knowledgeable employee is an empowered employee."

This CEO shares any information he could get from news clippings, which he thinks would help them improve or do better.

His philosophy of "a learning organization" allows him and his managers to meet whatever challenges the business might face.

"To respond to these challenges effectively and swiftly, we must be creative, innovative, quick and flexible," he said.

And there must always be a willingness to learn to achieve this.

During the early years of his career, Khoo's work was focused on international marketing and advertising.

He has a Masters degree in Development Management from the Asian Institute of Management where he was a Canadian International Development Agency scholar.

Khoo also conducts a monthly "Meet your CEO" session where he talks and listens to rank and file employees.

"I like to encourage them to be part of the problem-finding, problem-solving as well as idea-generating effort process," Khoo said.

But Khoo didn't stop at just involvement, empowerment and encouragement.

He initiated a cooperative "to protect members of this family from the exploitation of loan-shark operators."

It is aptly named Legend's Employees Growth Enterprise and Development (Legend) Co-operative.

This CEO's concern is not limited to his subordinates' welfare, but extends to their families too.

He organizes family days, or invites them to the company's gatherings.

"It is important that the employees' families know the kind of work and the workplace of their loved ones," he said.

"In that case, they would be able to understand when they have to spend a few hours more away from their homes."

A self-confessed environmentalist who had initiated several projects involving LIRL in promoting conservation, Khoo also likes to inculcate this social responsibility in the people of the company.

"I carried along with me my advocacy when I joined the LIRL family," he said.

He is particularly interested in three areas of social responsibility: environment, education and charity.

He makes the employees aware of the cause by involving them in the activities that he himself conceived.

Khoo knows very well how to motivate people having been involved in the academe for 15 years.

He instills in them his own personal philosophy which works for him, and works well for the employees. And that is, constant empowerment.

MIRAX Gabac and PJ Calpo

Profile of 2 young call center workers

RECENT government studies reveal that the working age group has shown confidence in the labor market because of the strengthening economy. The April 2004 Round of Labor Force Survey (LFS) of the National Statistics Office (NSO) states workers who join the labor force this year increased 1.8 percentage points over last year.

Despite the surge in employment, poverty in Filipino families remains evident because of the rising cost of living. Often parents' wages are not enough to pay for children's education; hence, children have to forego schooling and work at an early age.

According to an agent in a premiere call center in Libis, perseverance is the key to a good life.

For 21-year-old Miracle "Mirax" Gapac of the Customer Contact Center Inc. (C-Cubed), learning how to make sacrifices is the start to making one's own miracle.

Mirax knows better. She quit her Linguistics course in UP Diliman to send her younger sister to college and make both ends meet for her family. Her father retired from work a few years back. She also has another sister who will soon graduate from high school. In short, Mirax is the breadwinner of the family—by choice.

"Actually, it was my decision to delay my studies, and never did I regret that. My second sister was able to graduate last year from a computer school. It's very fulfilling for me," shares Mirax who still has a year left in UP to obtain her diploma.

Mirax recalls that she went to C-Cubed as a walk-in applicant and got the job. "I admit that my telephone interview did not turn out so well because I was nervous. I badly needed a job then and the pressure was overwhelming. I'm thankful that C-Cubed gave me the break."

Mirax encountered a lot of struggles before she enjoyed the fruits of her labor. She commuted daily from Bulacan to Libis before she could afford to rent an apartment nearby. Mirax even went to work two hours earlier so she could study the training manual on her own time.

"Although my course is related to my job as an agent, it is also very unlikely because I have to be immersed in a technical account," she reckons. As an escalation agent who takes calls from irate customers, Mirax had to master troubleshooting to assuage customers of C-Cubed's client, a leading international appliance company.

Her more than two years in C-Cubed paid off. Last year, Mirax was sent to Florida in the United States for training. "It's good that I did not give up on this account. If I were impatient, I could have requested HRD to transfer me to an easier account. The benefits I'm enjoying now are really worth my efforts," she explains.

On the other hand, 24 year-old Patrick Joseph "PJ" Calpo, has a very different case from Mirax. PJ is an Industrial Design graduate of the College of St. Benilde. He does not have the burden of earning to support his family.

However, PJ is aware that getting employed in the country is not easy. His course is not as in demand as Nursing, Computer or Commerce. "The country is not yet advanced when it comes to Industrial Design, so there is less demand for the job," asserts PJ.

Describing himself as an achiever, PJ decided to pursue a different career in a call center. He services C-Cubed's major client, a major financial institution. "It's really challenging. Before, I was used to using the artistic side of the brain, now, I have to learn and master banking," he beams.

When asked about their future plans, Mirax and PJ says they want to climb the corporate ladder.

C-CUBED is a Philippine firm that provides outsourced contact center services to companies in North America.

US retailers compete for school kit buyers

NEW YORK—Apparel retailers are hoping their back-to-school fashions will make the grade among style-conscious teens and young adults this fall, but it could be a tough sell, with students and parents keeping a tighter hold on their wallets.

Record high oil prices have bitten into American budgets, and a disappointing jobs market may mean consumers will take a more conservative approach to shopping.

The outcome could be especially painful for retailers, since the back-to-school period is their second-most important season behind the winter holidays.

"Consumers are not exactly in the mood to go on buying binges and shopping sprees," said Kurt Barnard, president of Barnard's Retail Consulting Group. "They will be very cautious in what they buy."

Life-style "surfer" looks, faux fur ponchos, preppy chic, always-popular denim, and accessories like backpacks are among analysts' picks for fall.

But the lack of a single "must-have" item—like low-rise jeans in years past—could stall the momentum of back-to-school shopping.

What's more, electronics have entered the mix.

Many students this year are less focused on fashion and more interested in keeping up with trends in technology, analysts said.

That means that some of the hottest back-to-school items will be electronics.

While students and parents will be willing to splurge on items like notebook computers and digital cameras, there will be less left in the family budget to spend on clothing.

Many Americans this fall will buy only items they need, and, when they do shop, they will choose the least expensive options, Barnard said.

Nagging weakness in the labor market has also sparked fears that many Americans, faced with the prospect of losing their jobs and having a tough time finding new ones, will curb their spending habits.

American Eagle Outfitters and Aeropostale Inc., both of which reported strong same-store sales in July, will continue to draw teens with the right mix of fashion and value, analysts said.

Some analysts are optimistic that sluggish sales in July for many retailers do not mean the remaining months are a wash for the fall season.

Reuters

From literally helping people up to solving individual problems

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ARLYN Acleta's mission in life is to help people.

She did it by literally helping people get back on their feet as part of her almost three years' work as a physical therapist.

Now, she does it by helping deal with the myriad problems posed by the clients of eTelecare, the country's largest contact center, through her work as a call center agent.

Similar to how she worked with her patients to help them overcome their individual problems and make them whole again, so did she with the topnotch clients who call on her and her colleagues every day.

By anticipating their problems and consistently and quickly making the right decisions with a sunny smile in her voice, Acleta was named best call center agent by CallCenter magazine during its Customer Care Leadership Awards last year, besting thousands in call centers here and abroad.

"To beat many other agents was an achievement for me. I was just lucky to get the opportunity to represent eTelecare and the Philippines," she said.

She got the plum award, which also allowed her to travel to the United States for the first time, due to her outstanding performance.

She received perfect company scores for solving problems and making decisions. She also earned high marks for her communication skills, flexibility, initiative, dedication and integrity, not to mention the many notes of thanks from satisfied customers.

It was fate that brought Acleta to the outsourcing industry, since she just joined eTelecare in January 2001 to take a yearlong break from her work as a licensed physical therapist.

CallCenter

ACLETA receiving her award as Best Call Center Agent in the United States.

That year has extended to three years, with Acleta quickly moving up the ranks from the entry-level call center agent to shift manager, handling seven team leaders with 10 agents each.

She says she has no plans yet of moving back to the sterile hospitals where she came from, as the call center industry has presented her with opportunities she did not dream possible.

This despite working the graveyard shift—from 10 in the evening to 7 in the morning, curtailing her social life.

"I really love my job. I know it has nothing to do with what I studied but I like it here because of the learnings and the growth," she says.

Acleta adds that she revels in the interaction with her colleagues and her bosses at eTelecare, which she did not experience when she was still in the hospital.

"Back then, I was mostly with old people. Here the managers are really young, so it is different. I also like the non-hierarchical structure. In the hospital, there is nothing like it. Here, it is more dynamic, and there is more interaction," she says.

She admits that it took her about six months to get used to working during the hours when most of her friends are sound asleep. But after getting through that hump, it is smooth sailing all the way for Acleta.

One of the highlights of her career is her surprise meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo on April 26, shortly after she got the award from the US.

She was on vacation when she got a call from eTelecare for her to cut short her leave and go back to the office.

She had no idea what was in store for her, but she bade her friends in Boracay goodbye anyway. She just trusted eTelecare officials to have a good reason for yanking her out of the island paradise.

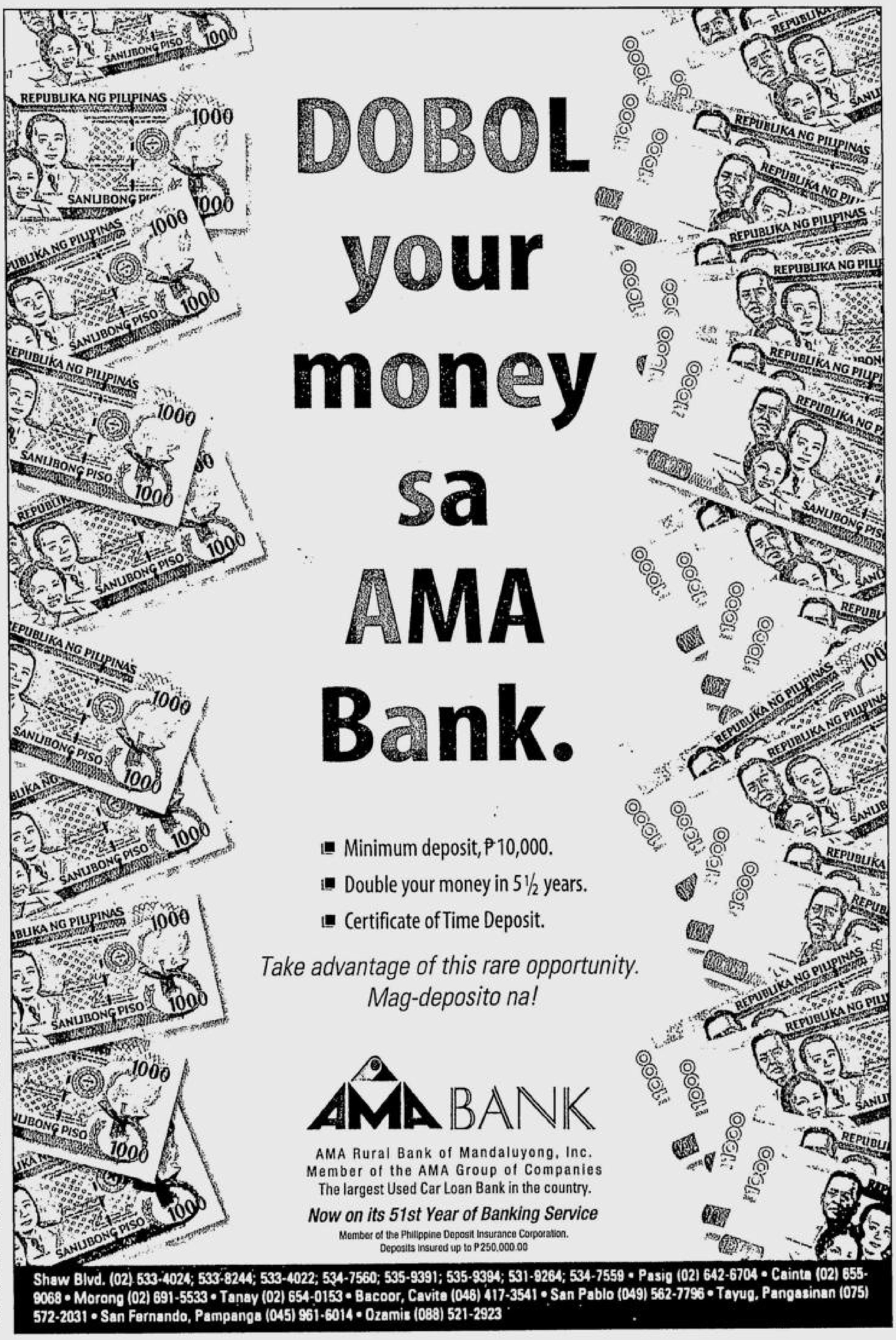
But Murphy's law took over and on top of her flight being delayed, and the massive traffic jam on her way to the office, she came to the office in her shorts and slippers with frizzled hair and a serious tan from all that sunbathing.

She was close to tears but her colleagues and family rallied around her. They brought in clothes and helped her put on her make up. Almost as soon as she put on her last dab of lipstick, it was time to meet the President.

That memory is still fresh in her mind and Acleta is aware that she always has to be on her toes to prove that she deserves her award.

But that's easy for her and she says she relishes the chance to talk to new employees and show them that being a call center agent is not a dead-end job as others say.

"I love talking to new people. I tell them that if they want a job that makes them learn something new every day, then this is the right job for them. I want to influence them in that way," she says.



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Editor Aries Espinosa

Globe EdTV: From rolling out to reaching out

By Menchie V. Osial

THE USE of a cell phone has become a way of life and a vital tool in daily communication that most people can't seem to pry away from it.

For the mobile professionals: technophiles, audiophiles, .partyphiles, or the juggler of tasks, Globe boasts a myriad of value-added services to suite any lifestyle. As one of the leading telecommunications company, Globe takes the mobile lifestyle to newer and greater heights. Mobility is the name of the game, and the next mega-trend that will shape all areas of the life of the consumer both in terms of providing information technology and media initiatives. As Globe continues its goal of providing a higher level of communication, it improves its network coverage by activating more cell sites in the provinces, and is clear proof that Globe is committed to its role as a partner in the improvement of life.

GLOBE engineer Federico Falcis spends regular time visiting the students of Tuba, Benguet Day Care Center.

GLOBE security head for South Luzon Mario Timbreza turns over the EdTV package to Mahabang Parang National High School principal Rosalina Vicencio and Barangay Mahabang Parang Captain Romeo Aragones of Binangonan, Rizal.

GLOBE'S PR specialist Allan Cuevas turns over a PC and printer package to Barangay Tabuc in Pontevedra, Capiz.

STUDENTS of M'lang Pilot School in North Cotabato experience the EdTV.

THE GL TURN OVER
INTENSITY G
GLOBE'S EdTV provides intensified learning experience in the school community.

STUDENTS of Binongkalan Elementary School, Catmon, Cebu share their dreams.

The world of technology spins at an ever-increasing pace-dizzyingly so, in fact-and Globe never lets up. The company's desire to always be one step ahead is understandable. With a continuously growing subscriber base, it has to live up to its image, which is that it delivers new communication experiences. Thus, it comes out with revolutionary services as a response to the market's need for easier, more powerful communication. This is the company's way of keeping its business in tiptop shape-by maintaining its competitive edge and pioneering stance into the next level of cutting-edge service offerings. Globe makes sure that it contributes positively to the social, economic, and environmental development of the communities where it operates. Its responsibilities come in various realms-business, family, and community.

Poverty alleviation programs

Because of its record of profitability, Globe has managed to cultivate its values and strong corporate social responsibility programs (CSR), thus, being able to maximize its impact on its subscribers, stockholders, and the community. Its staunch support and dynamism through poverty alleviation programs aims to help marginalized communities become part of the mainstream.

Education takes center stage among the various initiatives Globe takes. "Let us support programs that will help improve the quality of public school education in the country. It is high time we encourage the promotion and practice of volunteerism among us, as we participate in the call of the nation to alleviate poverty and uplift the lives of the less privileged in our society," said Globe president and CEO Gerry Ablaza. While the challenges and realization of securing a better tomorrow for the Filipino youth remains huge, Globe has made a quick start.

Globe looked into the present educational system, and tried to assess how it could contribute significantly to improving it. Because of the global environment we are in, there is a need to reinvent the education process. Today, information technology is revolutionizing lifestyles, work styles and is changing the process of learning. Learning has now become multi-sourced. Distance learning through educational and other delivery schemes are now being used in the school system. The modern teacher may find himself within the confines of the traditional classroom and its chalk-and-board environment but because of the pervasiveness of mass media and information technology. the teacher must also move with the times. The presence of multimedia resources such as television, computers, and the Internet enhance the quality of learning, increase teaching efficiency, and reduce educational cost.

There is a need to provide every Filipino child with quality and top caliber education. Globe took the pivotal role of providing enhanced basic education to the elementary school youth. It has forged a partnership with ABS-CBN Foundation Inc (AFI) for educational television programs reputed to be effective supplementary learning materials. Globe has adopted this as part of its corporate social responsibility program where public elementary and high-schools are the prime beneficiaries. Known as Educational Television or EdTV (a part of BridgeCom, Globe's integrated community relations program), it reflects the trend-setting innovations of Globe.

Birth of EdTV

On Oct. 23, 2003, Globe's EdTV was implemented. It is no substitute for the teacher, but it is an additional information tool where the teachers serve as guide.

While television has often been described as the boob tube, it's still one of the best mediums of information. By harnessing its vast potential, and by developing programs that increase knowledge, television can also be good for the youth. "The importance of EdTV is that lessons are fun and fast-paced-interactive learning becomes interesting. Most students of school-recipients would rather watch EdTV programs during break time than play. With this kind of educational infrastructure, more students will become interested in learning," said Jeffrey Tarayao, Globe CSR leader.

An EdTV infrastructure consists of a 21-inch television set, a VHS player, and 70 volumes of video programs on various subjects for all grade levels. Among them are "Sineskwela", "Mathtinik", "Epol/Apol", "Hirayamanawari", "Pahina" and "Bayani".

Studies show that students exposed to these educational materials have better comprehension and retention of lessons, heightened interest and enthusiasm in studying and yield improvement in daily class attendance. In addition, these programs are envisioned to instill in the minds of the Filipino youth a genuine sense of values and profound understanding of our cultural and historical heritage. As a result, students get higher grades and exhibit better over-all performance. The community, in general, improves.

Globe reaches out to more schools and touches more lives. The dream of bringing the EdTV project to every school in the country is a daunting task. Globe CSR volunteers do community work. Undmindful of the thirst, hunger, and heat, they sometimes walk through muddy trails, which take them to far-flung barangays. They endure wild rides to hard-to-reach areas on a rickety bus or van, hanging on to their seats as the vehicle staggers over the hopelessly uneven dirt roads or even roads submerged in water.

The Globe CSR Team is composed of a strong force of young, dynamic and selfless individuals. They are values-driven men and women with deep conviction and courage who stand as ambassadors of Globe Telecom. Any school beneficiary that Globe reaches out to receive a call from the Globe CSR team are assured of the best service possible for them and their community.

With 41 schools reached, EdTV still has 79 more schools on its list to complete its targeted 120 schools by the end of this year.

> Education takes center stage among the various initiatives Globe takes

RECEIVING from Florentino Awingan (3rd from left), principal of La Trinidad Central School, a token of appreciation are Globe CSR head Jeff Tarayao, Globe PR head Jones Campos and Globe Baguio account management specialist Arlynne Ronquillo.

TURN-OVER CEREMONY
OCT. 29, 2003
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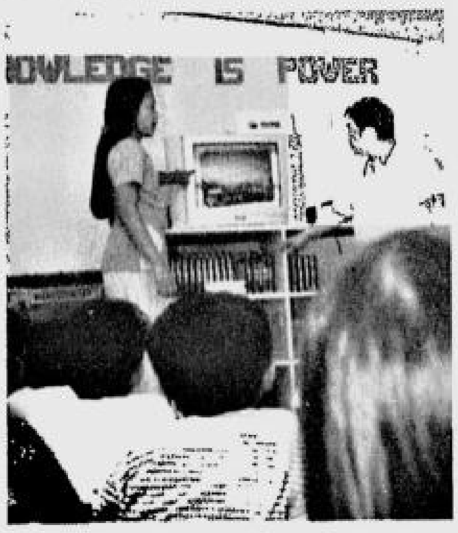
GLOBE first gave the EdTV to Porac Elementary School in Pampanga in October 2003. With the students is Joe Anthony Gagui, Globe head for north Luzon operations.

STUDENTS of Maycaban Primary School with Globe PR specialists Bryan Atienza and Allyn Margarejo

FACULTY members of Sta. Rita Carsada Elementary School with the Globe PR team

STUDENTS of the Tuba, Benguet Day Care Center with the children's books donated by Globe



STUDENTS and teachers of Soong Elementary School during a classroom discussion utilizing EdTV.

'Products are from factories, brands are from the mind'

By Amy R. Remo

IN THE early '90s, the world experienced the greatest economic boom, where virtually all markets thrived in the globally integrated economy.

People had the purchasing power, demand outstripped supply while more new products were introduced in the market.

But the 1997 Asian Crisis and the varying levels of economic downturns that followed, prompted many companies to reevaluate their strategies.

Most companies chose to cut operation costs and lower prices of products and services in the hope of luring consumers to their shops again.

According to John A. Caslione, president of international marketing and sales firm Andrew-Ward International Inc., who was in Manila recently to give a talk to members of the Young Presidents Organization, companies now operate in a "global discount-driven marketplace," where firms resorted to offering products at lower prices than their competitors and piling on free services and tangible benefits.

"During the easy and prosperous times of the '90s, businesses had become lazy and complacent in building brands and selling products," explains Caslione.

Most companies focused mainly on finance and manufacturing.

When the economic crisis began, companies opted to retrench, downsize and outsource. Since this wasn't enough, they resorted to the discount strategy.

"Discounting is not healthy for companies because it puts so much margin pressure that they may not even survive long enough to ride in on the wave of the next economic boom cycle," argues Caslione.

He says discounting doesn't work—it merely adds to the companies' operating costs, driving down profitability.

"The need to drive for lower cost is one thing. But when we lower the price, we sacrifice value too. Lower price does not necessarily mean lower costs," says Caslione.

He says both companies and consumers suffer from discounting.

For one, most products have been "commoditized" that it's difficult for consumers to determine which is the best buy.

All products, essentially, would be the same. The differentiating factor would simply be the price.

On the other hand, companies could not count on consumer loyalty anymore because of commoditization.

Buyers would become more interested with the freebies that go with buying a particular product or service.

Caslione says when this happens, consumers would only buy from a company until another offers a similar product at a much lower cost.

Also, with commoditization, companies lose their competitive edge, which keeps them on the forefront of creating novel ideas, as well as recognizing and anticipating problems.

He adds that with discounting, companies are unable to provide the marketplace with a truly compelling and persuasive total value proposition.

One effective way to compete in a discount-driven marketplace is to build or strengthen brands.

"The brand is the No. 1 communication vehicle for the vision of the company, for all the value it brings to the consumer," explains Caslione.

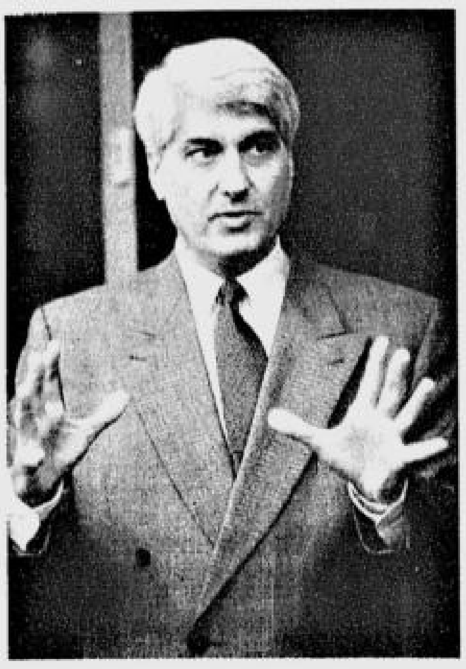
He says a brand forms the basis of relationship consumers have with the company.

"If you have no established brand equity, then the relationship defaults to the product itself, which has been commoditized and looks and acts like your competitors' products," says Caslione. "The remaining differentiator again, by default, is price."

Investing in brand identity makes it easier for a company to sell, entice consumers to buy and build brand equity.

He adds that companies have to acknowledge that "we live in a totally 'branded' world."

People often buy a branded product, even if it's more expensive.



CASLIONE: The need to drive for lower cost is one thing. But when we lower the price, we sacrifice value too. Lower price does not necessarily mean lower costs.

Brands like Volvo thrive because the value and reliability attached to the brand goes beyond the product's basic function. It, thus, can command a higher price and consumer loyalty, at the same time.

This is why, Caslione explains, it's important to seize every opportunity to position the company in the consumers' minds.

To effectively build a brand, the company must first identify and understand its target market.

A company must be able to build its product on the premise of consumers' perceptions, values, preferences, dreams and lifestyles.

Market segmentation and product positioning are other ways of building a strong foundation for the brand.

Segmentation means "to separate the consumers into clustered groups, each with their own special interests, lifestyles and desire for particular goods and services."

It can be business-to-consumer, business-to-business, and global.

Caslione says in each market segment, a company has to establish its position and focus on the needs of that particular segment.

In positioning your product, Caslione says a company should not only be concerned with its share of the market, but also "share of mind" and "top of mind."

"Share of mind" pertains to the percentage of buyers, who actually know your product, while "top of mind" refers to being the first product to be thought of by consumers.

If another brand comes to mind, a company can create another position or positioning statement. For example, one can be known for having the highest level of technology, best service for the price, the most fashionable, easiest to use, and so on.

However, a company should keep in mind that it can't be all things to its consumers.

Caslione says if a particular position is already taken by the competitor, a company can position its product in another unique way by re-establishing brand image and equity.

"Positioning breaks through barriers of oversaturated markets to create new opportunities," says Caslione.

He adds: "Products are created in the factory. Brands are created in the mind."

US hotel . . .

From page B2-8

"But they may not come."

Even so, after five years of effort behind closed doors, Bigelow Aerospace is nearly ready to begin flight-testing its hardware, and has applied to the Federal Aviation Administration for approval to launch its Genesis module into orbit on a commercial rocket in November 2005.

Contest heats up

Genesis is a one-third scale test version of the company's habitable Nautilus module, the first of which could be launched as early as 2008, depending on the results of subsequent orbital tests, scheduled for 2006 and 2007.

Watermelon-shaped, with 330 cubic meters of interior volume, the Nautilus would approach the International Space Station's current 425 cubic meters, and could be attached to others of its kind to create much larger orbital habitats.

Bigelow's efforts come as the commercial space race is heating up.

A US team has set Sept. 29 as the date for a second space launch of SpaceShipOne, the first privately funded manned ship to reach space. *Reuters*

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How do you dress for a cocktail party?

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: I KNOW that there are several kinds of cocktail parties. However, most people I know, including myself, sometimes get confused on the formality of these events. Is it true that if it is a cocktail it is never formal? Please clarify this for us. I have been receiving a lot of invitations lately both for business cocktails and wedding receptions that are cocktail parties. Please tell us what are the different types of cocktail parties and the proper attire to wear when going to these functions.

Cocktail Parties

A: The differences between an invitation to "cocktails," "cocktail party," "cocktail buffet" and a "cocktail reception" are usually the amount of food served, attire and the theme of the event.

"Come for drinks…"

The most casual of get-togethers. When you are invited for drinks, come as you please for an informal get together with friends. Formal invitations are never issued. A verbal, 'come over for drinks at 6 this afternoon' over the telephone is sufficient. This is usually an impromptu get together. Dinner is not served. Drinks can include wines, beer, sherry, cocktails, softdrinks, juices and champagne.

A "come over for drinks" get together can precede an event that you and your friends are attending, a show at a theater or even a restaurant. Food is simple, ranging from bowls of nuts, trail mix, olives, cheeses, dips, crackers and cold cuts. Depending on how much you are willing to spend, you can have smoked salmon, pate, and the like. Dinner of course is never served.

Cocktails and cocktail buffets

When you are invited for cocktails, the formality of the event depends on the occasion.

Invitations are always issued. More often than not, the invitation will specify some sort of time limit such as "cocktails from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m."

For events such as these, guests are mostly standing and dress attire can range from business to casual. Small tables and chairs are set up for guests after they fill up their plates at the buffet station. The attire is usually a cocktail dress or business attire. This event can last for two to three hours.

Cocktail receptions

Cocktail receptions are the most formal of all cocktail parties. The attire is very dressy for women and usually black tie for men. The reception can be held for a distinguished guest of honor or an event, such as an opening of a new museum or even a wedding reception. There is so much food that the reception can count as dinner. The food is often served buffet style in stations on small plates and cocktail forks. Drinks range to a full bar and Champagne is always served. Small tables and chairs are set up but people are expected to stand, walk around and mingle.

To be continued next week…

Please email your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com names of senders will not be published.

US hotel tycoon reaches for the stars

LAS VEGAS—Budget Suites of America owner Robert Bigelow made his fortune by offering weary business travelers a fully furnished home away from home, complete with on-site laundry.

He now wants to bring the same feeling of comfort and convenience to a new frontier in leisure: outer space.

From a 50-acre research facility on the outskirts of Las Vegas, the 60-year-old entrepreneur can survey the length of the city's famous Strip, home to some of the biggest hotels in the world.

Still, Bigelow has his sights set higher—250 miles higher, to be exact.

Commercial station

Through his latest business venture, Bigelow Aerospace, the hotel mogul, who caught the space bug as a boy in the 1950s, has been quietly building the world's first commercial space station.

If all goes well, space hotels will not be far behind—provided that future space tourists have a way to check in.

"We can build it," Bigelow said.

US HOTEL/ B2-7

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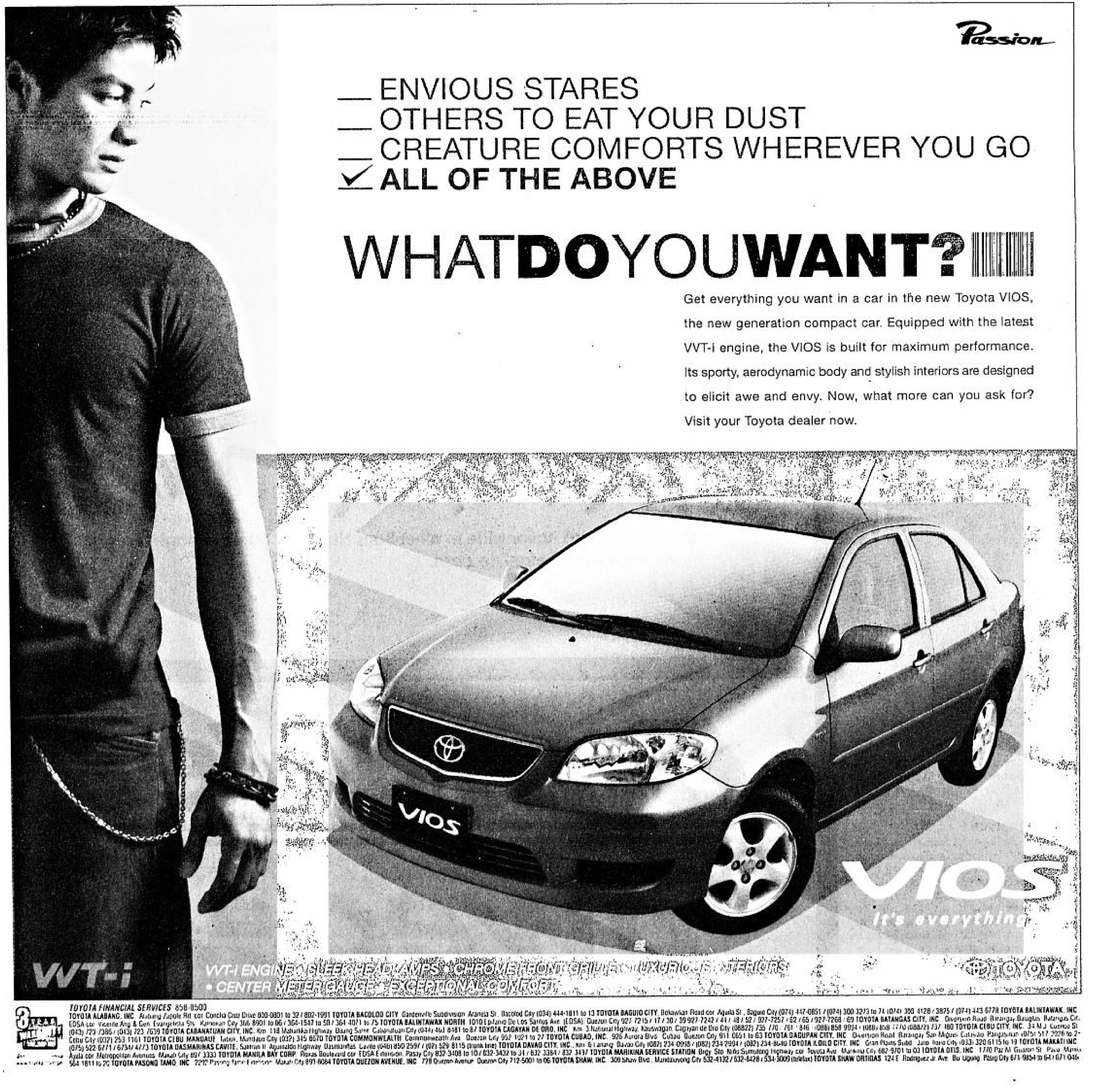

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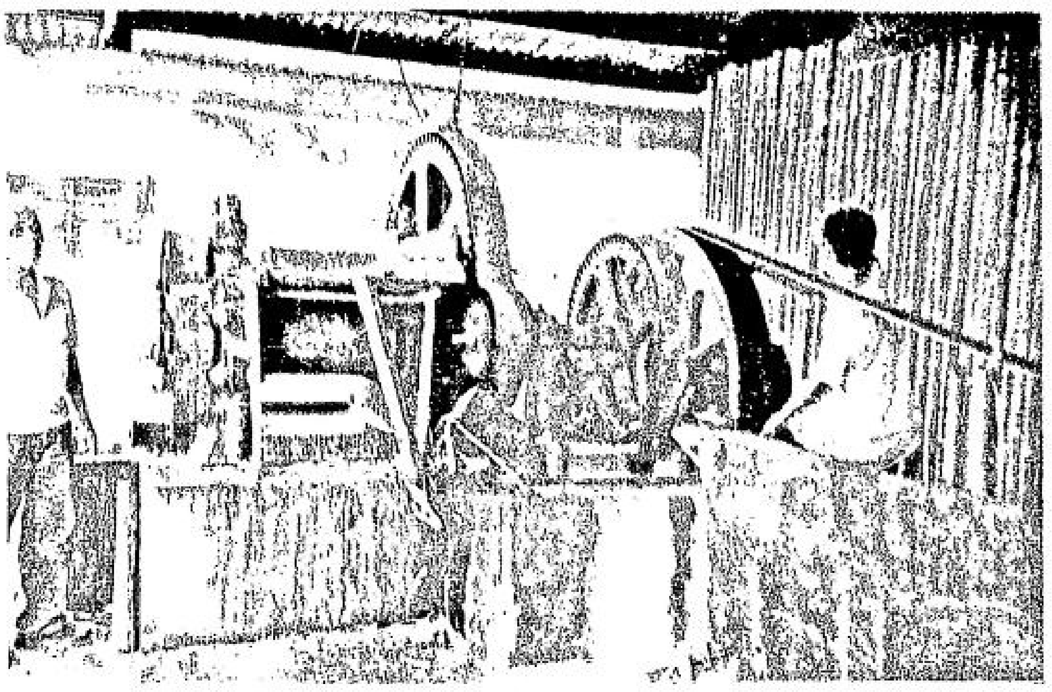
MUSCOVADO: THE OTHER SUGAR

Centuries-old industry aches to boom

By Jo M. Clemente
Contributor



(TOP) Romulo de la Cruz and his vintage muscovado mill. (Right) The moist brown healthy sugar set to cool. PHOTOS BY JO CLEMENTE

PATNONGON, Antique—True to the dictionary meaning of its name, which is old or aged, Antique is not only home to the centuries-old Comedia but to this day continues to be the homeground of the other sugar industry—the *muscovado*.

Called the "healthy sugar," the muscovado, is a moist brown natural sugar derived from sugar cane through a chemical-free extraction process.

As such, it is considered a health food due to the presence of minerals and trace elements beneficial to the body. It is spreading its goodness here and abroad.

With the introduction of centrifugal refineries in the early 1900s, that brought out the now popular refined or white sugar, the muscovado became but a shadow in a monopoly driven sugar industry.

But the many small mills that produce it continue to do so quietly through the decades, in the fields and farmyards of Antique.

Today, with the increasing demand for healthy sugar, Antique rises from the shadows of its traditional muscovado mills to meet the demands of an industry that is aching to boom.

Not enough supply

Since the '60s, Antique produces about 70 percent of the country's muscovado sugar.

Recent data from the Antique office of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) says the province produces an average of 3,682 tons of muscovado every year, a volume not enough to cover local and international demands.

This production is drawn from about 570 hectares of sugarcane fields involving about 767 farmers.

According to Elsa Barrientos, chair of the Antique Muscovado Sugar Producers Marketing Cooperative, they have to turn down orders because they cannot sustain the volume.

"Right now," she says, "we can only sustain two regular volume orders. One is in Bacolod and the other in Iloilo."

Barrientos says these companies export muscovado to Japan.

"Another company wants us to supply them with 200 tons monthly, but there isn't enough," Barrientos adds.

Why Antique

The growing demand for muscovado was confirmed by DTI. According to them, even as early as 1994, they had been asked by a US trading firm if they can supply 50,000 tons of muscovado.

Sugarcane-producing Antique became a natural fallback area to operate the small muscovado mills when the centrifugal sugar refineries came in.

Folks here say this was so because the province could not produce enough sugar cane to sustain a big mill.

Thus, between 1910 until 1935, when big sugar centrals were established in Negros and Iloilo that eventually displaced the small muscovado mills, they found their way to Antique.

Since then, the province had become a major producer of muscovado for the country.

This industry is predominant in at least five Antique towns: Patnongon, Valderama, Belison, Sibalom and Laua-an.

In Laua-an town for instance, its barangay Ginbangaan has about 26 muscovado mills. This small village of about 2,000 people basically thrives from growing sugarcane in their farms, producing muscovado in their backyard and cooking *bandi mani* from their kitchen.

Bandi mani or candied peanuts is a local delicacy here and is a side business drawn from the production of muscovado.

To sweeten the peanuts, the "*lasaw*" or molasses is used instead of the fully processed sugar. Compared to molasses drawn from centrifugal refineries, this kind is fit for human consumption because it is clean and chemical-free.

Refinements

In its latest inventory, the DTI here counts about 144 muscovado mills still actively operating.

These machines grew out from the animal driven pre-hispanic mills, introduced in the country by Chinese traders.

In Patnongon town in particular, what they have are the centuries-old cast iron mills and multi-kettle train cookers brought in from England in the early 1800s.

Upgraded and improved through the decades, these mills had graduated from the manually operated mills to engine powered ones. The core mill, however, is retained.

Seventy-four-year-old Romulo de la Cruz, for instance, still operates his vintage 1879 machine in his Patnongon farm.

This machine was inherited from his father Pablo who died in 1996 at 98 years old. The machine was manufactured by the Mirrlees Watson Co. Inc. in England and acquired by Pablo's grandfather (Romulo's great grandfather).

During Romulo's time, the mill was upgraded and a motor engine was attached. From this mill, Romulo produces 70 to 80 piculs of muscovado per hectare of sugarcane.

He has a 15-hectare sugarcane field.

Process

From the fields to the burning vats to point of sale, nothing is thrown away in producing the muscovado.

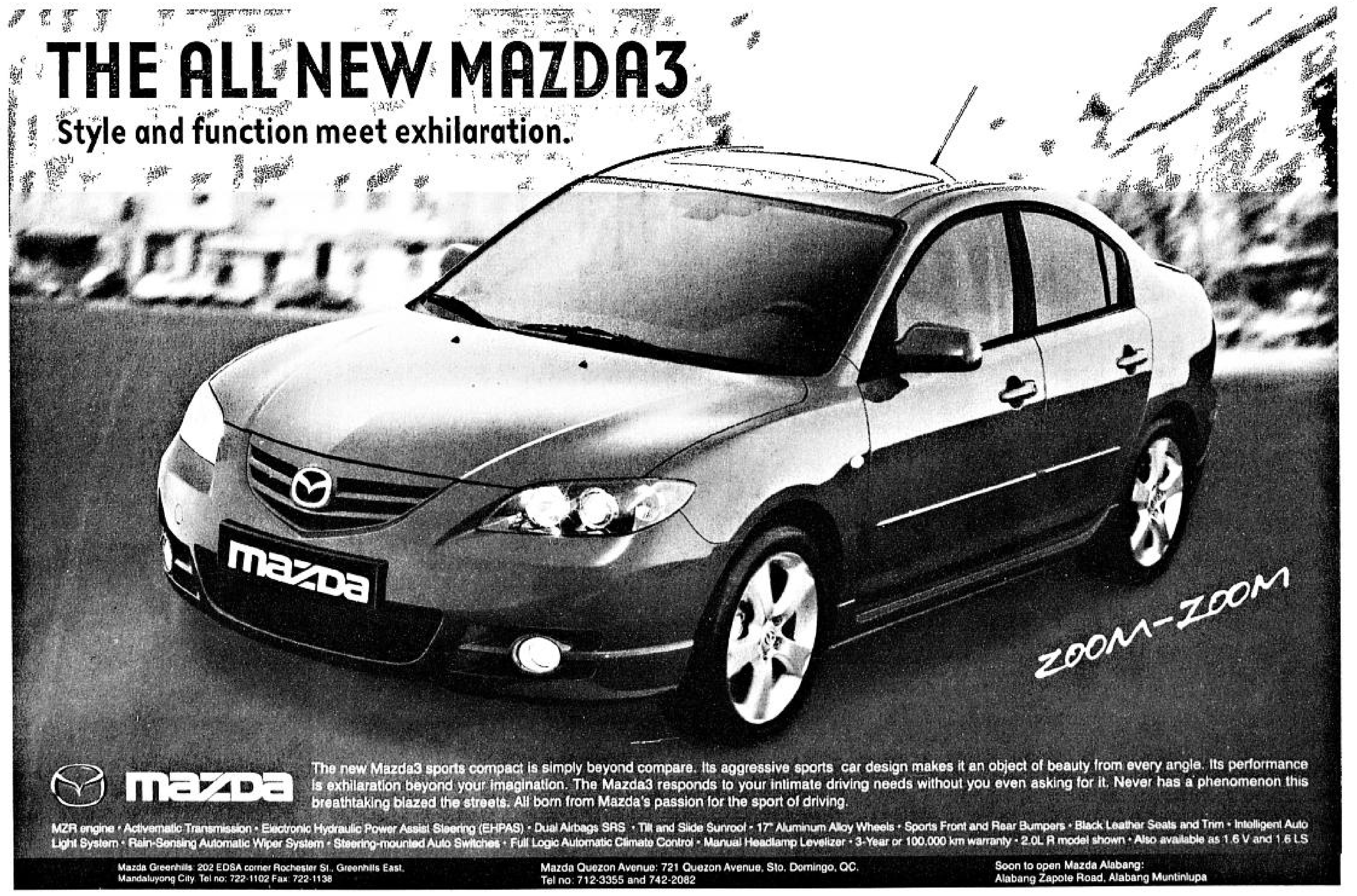
After the sugarcane is harvested, the leaves are cut off and let out to dry while the end stubs called "*tabas*" are replanted in the field.

The sugarcane are then fed to the mill to extract the juice. Once done, the sugarcane pulp called "*bagas*" isn't thrown away, but is also let out to dry.

At some point during the cooking, when the juice has turned into a sticky golden brown substance called "*lasaw*", the "*bagas*" and dried sugarcane leaves are used to fuel the stove instead of rice hull or wood, to regulate the temperature and allow the substance to simmer before it finally settles and become a moist brown sugar.

Romulo says on a warm day, it takes almost four hours to boil

CENTURIES-OLD/ B3-3



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STI College Caloocan's 'Hakot Awards'

YES, INDEED. It's another fruitful year for STI College Caloocan. The college bagged three social awards during the cluster finals held in Taft Avenue, Manila. The Interactive Dance Group won the championship in the "Hataw Sayaw" contest while Gretel Tulio, a first year BS ComSci student, won the OPM Pop Solo over contenders from Taft, Recto and Tondo. Another champion from STI Caloocan, the Haruka Kanata band, won the "Pazikla-bands" contest, jamming to the tune of the ever-popular song "Bongga Ka Day!" Mr and Ms STI representatives both took home the awards for Best in Formal wear, while the latter won the best in sports wear and was crowned 2nd runner up.

While the students were much involved in the whole event, the college faculty and staff got their equal share in the excitement. Fe C. Ibarra, marketing department head, and Louie Vincent Molina, an instructor from the Academic IT Department, represented Caloocan in the faculty and staff OPM duet. Extravagant preparations made earlier in the local eliminations held last July 28 in Padi's Point Monumento paid up and made other contender STI schools recognize Caloocan as the "Hakot Awards school".

On the other hand, it's not only the social cultural group of STI Caloocan which rejoiced but also the Academic group which won a total of three championship awards and a couple of placers. Following the social cluster finals, the academic cluster finals was held in STI College Caloocan campus Aug. 6 which was joined by Angeles, San Fernando, Taft, Recto, Meycauayan and Malolos. Students Sheryl Anne Lau, Casey Ann Despi, and Christopher Abello showed their prowess and were hailed as champions in the "IT Matters!", "A Tale To Tell", and "Math Factor" respectively. Caloocan also ranked 2nd in the "Into Programming" and 3rd in the "Essay Does It!"

Students from Caloocan enlivened the motto of STI's 21st anniversary celebration "Search for Talent and Intelligence!". STI's network of colleges has conjoined once again for the annual "Tagisan ng Talino and Talent Search", which is a showcase of academic and non-academic skills of students. It features the artistic and creative as well as the hidden cultural talents of students in a technical school. Among the pool of STI branches, STI College Caloocan garnered most of the champion titles.

College president Walfrido A. Xavier and college administrator Donna Ancheta were happy with the outcome of the cluster finals. "Our school is proud of all who participated in the local eliminations. We also take pride on those who represented and won in the cluster finals. You are all champions in our hearts. Keep it up and kita-kits tayo sa grand finals! See you all in Star City this Aug. 21," enthused Ancheta.

Syndrome X and Type 2 Diabetes

DIABETES is a growing global epidemic. Currently, about 140 million people worldwide have type 2 diabetes, and if trends continue, the number is predicted to double in the next 25 years.

Excess weight and obesity are major risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes. However, obesity and diabetes are both considered risk factors in developing a condition that has been linked to the progression of several potentially deadly diseases.

Syndrome X is a term for a cluster of conditions that tend to appear together in some individuals. Visceral obesity, type 2 diabetes, high total cholesterol, high total LDL cholesterol (bad cholesterol), high blood pressure, and coronary heart disease make up the cluster of conditions that define Syndrome X. A person presented with three or more of these conditions is suffering from Syndrome X and is more inclined to develop heart disease and diabetes.

In understanding the link between Syndrome X and diabetes, it is important to examine the role played by insulin resistance in the development of type 2 diabetes. Also called adult-onset non insulin dependent diabetes, type 2 diabetes happens when the insulin produced by the body is not enough to convert food into energy.

It has also been hypothesized by several researchers that insulin resistance unifies the clustering of risk factors that mark the progression of Syndrome X. Insulin resistance is aggravated even more by obesity and physical inactivity. Those who are insulin resistant have an imbalance in their blood lipids (blood fat), increased level of triglycerides, and a decreased level of HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol)-markers similar to those of Syndrome X.

In a research conducted by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, results showed that 22 percent of adults between the ages of 20 and 79 have at least three of the symptoms of Syndrome X. Locally, it is estimated that one out of five adult Filipinos suffers from Syndrome X.

For most patients, Syndrome X is usually caused by improper nutrition, inactivity or inadequate physical activity, and an increase in body weight. It is also often seen in people who are obese than in those who have normal body weight.

Most of the symptoms of the syndrome can be treated with medications. However, most physicians recommend regular exercise, proper diet and good weight management as the initial therapeutic strategy for preventing Syndrome X. When these lifestyle changes are no longer effective, a drug is prescribed to help patients manage Syndrome X.

Orlistat is the only available fat blocker medication that works locally in the gut to prevent dietary fat absorption. There are clinical studies to prove that it blocks 30 percent of the dietary fat intake, and could lower the seven parameters in patients with Syndrome X: waist circumference, cholesterol, triglycerides, blood sugar, weight, LDL/HDL ratio, and blood pressure.

Primarily indicated for weight management, orlistat has recently been approved by the European Commission as a medication that can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Orlistat is now also indicated for the prevention and treatment of Syndrome X.

Orlistat is a prescription drug and should be bought at a doctor's advice.

SARA LEE PHILIPPINES DONATES P1.5M HANES PRODUCTS

Sara Lee Philippines branded apparel division recently donated to Caritas Manila P1.5 million worth of Hanes products, Hanes Her Way and Wonderbra. The awarding was witnessed by executives and the management team of Sara Lee Philippines led by Mike Hegedus (right), deputy general manager, together with representatives from Caritas. Also shown are (from left) Jun Alejandria, finance controller, Virgie Moreno, sourcing and product development director, and Noel Royandoyan, human resources manager, presenting a Hanes shirt to Rose Serna, Caritas representative, while Mari Litonjua, marketing manager and Ernesto Aranjue of Caritas look on.

ink-Man
INK REFILLING CENTER
ink-Man

INK-MAN FRANCHISE SIGNING

Ink-Man Ventures Inc recently inked a franchise contract with OFW Algel Ramos (2nd from right) for the establishment of an Ink-Man Ink Refilling Center in Dasmarinas, Cavite. Shown signing the contract with Ramos is Ink-Man Ventures Inc president Erick Armigos. Witnessing the signing are franchise sales consultant Nanie Dinglasan (left) and store head Rainer Gubat.

MALASA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Brgy. Anupul, Bamban, Tarlac
COCA-CO A LITTLE

LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE TURNOVER

The Coca-Cola Foundation Philippines Inc (CCFPI) recently completed and turned over two Little Red Schoolhouses (LRS) in the province of Tarlac to the Department of Education. The LRS project donates three-classroom buildings with toilet and classroom equipment to select public multigrade elementary schools. To date, there have been 53 schoolhouses built and donated to DepEd through the CCFPI. CCFPI turned over the 53rd LRS to the DepEd in Malasa Elementary School in Barangay Anupul, Bamban, Tarlac. 80 percent of Malasa ES caters to the indigenous group of Aetas. Signing the MOA and certificate of donation are (seated from left) PTCA president Eddie Nartia, DepEd Division Superintendent for Tarlac Dr. Victoria Aguas, CCFPI president Cecille Alcantara, and Barangay Captain Sonny Gomez. Standing are Dr. Dinah Mindo, DepEd Regional Director for Region 3 and Bamban Mayor Leonardo Anunciacion.

Goldilocks

THE WINE AND CAKE DUO

Carlo Rossi, a premium California wine, recently inked an agreement with Goldilocks Bakeshop to offer a special promo dubbed Carlo Rossi All-Occasion Packs. This promo pack is composed of 3 bottles of 750-ml Carlo Rossi California Red and a Goldilocks gift certificate, which could be exchanged for a free whole-sized Brazo de Mercedes or Choco Cake Roll. Avail yourself of Carlo Rossi All-Occasion Packs at your favorite supermarkets now and let the celebration begin. Carlo Rossi is a product of E&J Gallo. Shown during the contract signing were (center) Von Hizon, managing director for international brands of The Andresons Group, exclusive distributor of Carlo Rossi, together with (from left) Goldilocks Bakeshop's Ervy Epistola, local store marketing manager and Sali Sauco, marketing manager, BS. Witnessing the affair were (standing) Lloyd Dizon, The Andresons Group product manager for Gallo Wines and Sochie Cervantes, Goldilocks marketing officer.

Seminar-workshop gauges project success

KNOW where your project is and where it's headed. Know how to design and assess this project. Know how to develop quantitative and qualitative criteria and indicators to do these. Finally, know the uses and applications of project assessment for planning and management.

All these will be taught in the seminar-workshop on Project Monitoring and Evaluation to be held on Aug. 23 and 24. It is one of the most requested courses in the short-term Professional Development Program of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication (AIJC). The Institute spearheads this affordable professional development course. AIJC is a graduate school and consultancy firm that boasts of a curriculum that combines theory and hands-on learning.

The venue for the seminar-workshop is the AIJC seminar room at Annapolis Wilshire Plaza, 11 Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan. For more details, call 724-4564 or 725-4227 or e-mail aijcmla@info.com.ph.

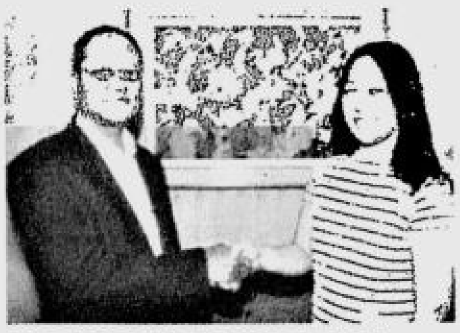
Kadayawan's festivals

THE 19th Kadayawan sa Dabaw, in partnership with the Davao Association of Tour Operators (Dato), will hold an exhibition of sights and sounds of various festivals in the island in the 2nd Mindanao Festivals Expo from Aug. 16 to 22 at the 2nd floor South Gallery of SM City Davao. The expo is open to all municipalities, cities and provinces as well as tourism-related establishments all over Mindanao where they can exhibit their tourist attractions, industries, cultures and festivals. For more inquiries, you may call committee chair Wanda Teo (Mt. Apo Travels & Tours) at (82)221-1729, 0917-7018849, event coordinator Shiela Labos at (82)-227-2477 or 0919-5736458, Dato-Pia Montano (PAR Travel Agency) at (82)226-2931 or 221-3424, or 0917-8110753, City Tourism Office-Vivian Lorico at (82)222-1956 or 0916-7542077.

APO's orthodontic congress

BIT Clips

IN CELEBRATION of its 24th anniversary, the Association of Philippine Orthodontists (APO) proudly announces its 4th National Orthodontic Congress on Aug. 16 and 17 at the Hotel InterContinental Manila in Makati. According to Dr. Sandra Syliangco-Adriano, APO's incoming president, "It is time to go back to the basics and simplify. For this reason, we have chosen the theme 'Orthodontics Simplified-Empowering Our Basic Biomechanics.'" US-based specialists Dr. Tom Mulligan and Dr. Robert Boyd will fly to Manila as special guest speakers during the congress. The 4 National Orthodontic Congress is sponsored by Ahescor (3M, Unitek) JRLT Trading (Masel USA) and AVM Ortho Inc (SDS Ormco). For further inquiries, call the APO secretariat at 671-4799 or 671-6475.



MEGAWORLD FOUNDATION SCHOLAR GRADUATES

Megaworld Foundation scholar Rhea Macalincag recently paid a courtesy call on Megaworld Foundation president and Megaworld Corp executive vice president Cirilo Manlangit. A cum laude graduate of BS Interior Design at the University of the Philippines, she is among 11 recent graduates out of 37 beneficiaries of the Megaworld College Scholarship Program for 2003-2004. Established in 1999, the program supports outstanding but financially needy students of architecture, engineering, interior design and information technology-related courses such as computer science and computer engineering in schools such as Far Eastern University, Mapua, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, University of the East, University of the Philippines and University of Santo Tomas.

Supply chain management seminar

BAYANTRADE invites all purchasing managers or any manager involved in a company's supply chain to the American Management Association's (AMA) Course on Supply Chain Management, which will be held from Aug. 16 to 18 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. AMA brings a world-class curriculum developed through the years by top academic and corporate experts. The course promises to provide learnings on action-oriented supply chain management skills and best practices that will help companies improve service, cut costs and increase the flow of information to boost supplier-customer relations. The training will be conducted by David A. Burrows PhD. He brings with him 35 years of experience in strategic sourcing, procurement and supply chain in various industries, both private and public sectors, and a doctorate degree in supply chain management. For more information, call Amor Tan Cha at 815-0938 or e-mail inquire@bayantrade.com.

More PEP on page B2-6

ROL-ME in Tagaytay Sept. 3

THE REACHING Out for the Lord (ROL) Series of the Tuklasan Sector-Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines is slated to sponsor another Marriage Encounter (ME) weekend seminar from Sept. 3 to 5 at the Angels' Hills Seminar and Formation Center, Tagaytay City.

Spearheaded by Ron-Fe Canlas, together with their ROL 19 classmates, the weekend seminar is ideal for married couples seeking fulfillment and rejuvenation in their marriages. The 3-day live-in seminar also hopes to redirect their relationship to be Christ-centered.

Scheduled to serve as ecclesial team are Rev. Fr. Jess V. Fernandez SJ, Ric-Phine Tolentino and Henry-Arlene Canivel.

For registrations/reservations (on a first-come, first-serve basis), call Randy-Zarah Barcelona at 742-2434 or 742-5981, Abbie-Shiggie Villanueva at 842-3542, Manny-Lisa Morales at 739-9749, Gerry-Gina Martinez at 0918-9119680, 0918-9119672 or 871-5141, Dong-Emie Lalic at 872-3275, 0918-9280293, Freddie-Rachel de Leon at 0917-8488736, Gerry-Sheila Reglos at 770-6760, or 0917-6257014 and Joe-Janet Saldana at 842-4349.

The deadline for registrations/reservations is on Aug. 27. Seminar fee is P3,600 per couple for the entire 3-day weekend.

PREPARING FOR SUMMIT

The Philippine Coop Center (PCC) chair Senen Bacani and Coop Development Authority (CDA) Administrator Hombre S. Hamsirani (right) signed recently a memorandum of agreement for the conduct of the 7th National Cooperative Summit in October 2004. The National Cooperative Summit is an event mounted every two years by the coop movement featuring conferences and workshops on various topics relevant to coops in the Philippines. The summit also features trade fairs, exhibits and study tours. PCC is the largest network of coops, composed of 14 national coop networks, 7 regional coop networks, and a number of primary cooperatives. CDA is the government's regulatory body for coops.

Sad corporate tale told

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

"The Art of Corporate Grabbing"
By Roland E. Villacorta
2003, 224 pages

IT BEGAN way back in 1959, when the peso was two to a US dollar.

A cement plant in a Mindanao city had been acquired with a $3.7-million loan from the US Development Loan Fund.

The plant turned out to be defective, having been constructed by inexperienced American engineers who did not conduct a thorough soil analysis of the plant site.

Through his company, V.C. Ponce Co., civil engineer Vicente C. Ponce undertook rehabilitation measures. Broken pipes were replaced, and hundreds of 60-foot concrete piles brought in. Ponce was asked to invest in the plant, which he did.

For P80,000, he bought 40 million of the plant's one billion shares of stock. Little did he realize that this would usher in manifold problems that, after four decades, remain unresolved.

The plant was inaugurated in 1965 by then first lady Eva Macapagal. (Her successor Imelda Marcos was later reported to have become an investor in the plant.)

At first, sales were slow in the highly competitive market. Potential clients were skeptical. But with improved production, maintained efficiency and effective product promotion, sales zoomed.

By the end of 1969, plant employees and families had their "best Christmas" ever.

Things went so well that the plant soon had two sister companies.

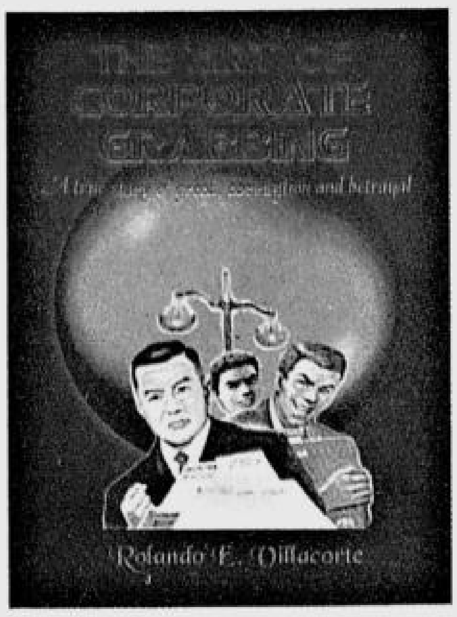
Partner A was placed in charge of one plant, and Partner B, who was close to Ponce, became responsible for the other two plants.

The two partners were elderly and feisty men. There was bad blood between them because of a land case in Mindanao and two unresolved killings. The two went around with armed bodyguards.

By 1983, Partner A announced to Ponce that "we are ready to issue stock certificates" on a 50-50 sharing, as agreed upon. Unfortunately, Partner A died, and that was when the troubles began.

Ponce learned that the shares of his partner had been transferred (by the partner or by his family) to an investment and development corporation they (the family) had organized.

The author, a former newsman, reports: Ponce's group now appeared to have only a total of 6.225 million shares as against the other group's 65.774 million shares.



The shares of Ponce's wife, Nelia, and their three associates were intact. But, author Villacorta comments, some 31.880 million shares of Ponce" ... like Jonah ... had ... been swallowed by a great fish—"a reference to the development and investment corporation.

In a subsequent confrontation with the family, the widow was said to have expressed a wish for an amicable settlement. But the family's corporate lawyer contended that their accounting records were accurate.

He dared Ponce to file a case, which the latter did.

The civil engineer's problems did not end there. It turned out to be a case of double whammy.

Partner B, Ponce's friend, died in 1988, and his heirs took over the two cement plants he was in charge of.

Soon Ponce learned that his name no longer appeared in the stockholders' list and that all of his shares "appeared to have been surgically removed and transplanted..."

There followed a bewildering series of suits and countersuits, complaints and libel cases, some of which have landed in the Department of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission the Office of the Ombudsman and the Supreme Court.

Most of the cases are still pending.

Ponce's perseverance in the face of his travails has won praise from former Sen. Jovito Salonga; Eugenia D. Apostol, president of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power and retired Supreme Court Justice Camilo Quiason.

The author describes the now elderly engineer as having "the patience of Job and the faith of a Pollyana."

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In Turbulent Seas:
The Status of Philippine Marine Fisheries

SAVE THE FISHES
The fisheries' sector's challenges are highlighted in this book, a concerted effort of some 78 scientists, fisheries experts, marine conservationists, academics, government authorities to profile the sector's resources, management issues and policies.

Centuries-old ...

From page B3-1

the sugarcane juice. It takes much longer during damp days. Milling starts in November and ends in April.

Potentials

The motor upgrading of the mills though was not enough.

For Antique's muscovado to become an international commodity, some sediments like ash that gets into the product during processing, should be minimized or removed.

Through the combined financial and technical support of the provincial government of Antique, the DTI, the Department of Science and Technology and the Sugar Regulatory Authority, an applicable technology that improved the quality and production efficiency of the muscovado, without changing the traditional chemical-free process, was adopted.

The local government in particular, acknowledging the big potentials of the muscovado industry, provided funds to assist farmers in upgrading their mills.

But according to Antique Gov. Salvacion Perez, they need so much more.

At the moment, only about 8 percent of the active mills have been upgraded and the demand for muscovado had been soaring.

Funny but this centuries-old industry that is way past its sunrise, is aching to boom. Properly supported, it will not only provide a healthy food alternative but also the much needed dollars to support the country's ailing economy.

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c. HP Multi-function Inkjet Printers (Models - OJ 9110, OJ 9120, OJ 9130)
2 The purchase should be made within the period of June 1 to August 31, 2004 only. Redemption is only valid up to October 30, 2004, 60 days after the promo period.
3 To claim the cordless phone, customers should fax or email a copy of the invoice together with the cut out sticker (completely filled-up information required), and a copy of any valid ID (e.g. driver's license, passport, company ID, SSS ID, etc.) for identification purposes.
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Personal Color Laser Printer
19ppm, Image REt 2400
64MB (up to 192MB max)
125-sheet input tray standard
Monthly duty cycle of 30,000 p/month
₱30,199
Q3702A

HP color LaserJet 4650 Versatile Workgroup Color Laser Printer
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160MB standard
600-sheet input tray standard
Monthly duty cycle of 85,000 p/month
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HP OfficeJet 9110 High-Capacity All-in-One Business Inkjet
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Promo Period runs from June 1 until August 31, 2004
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1061 Series of 2004

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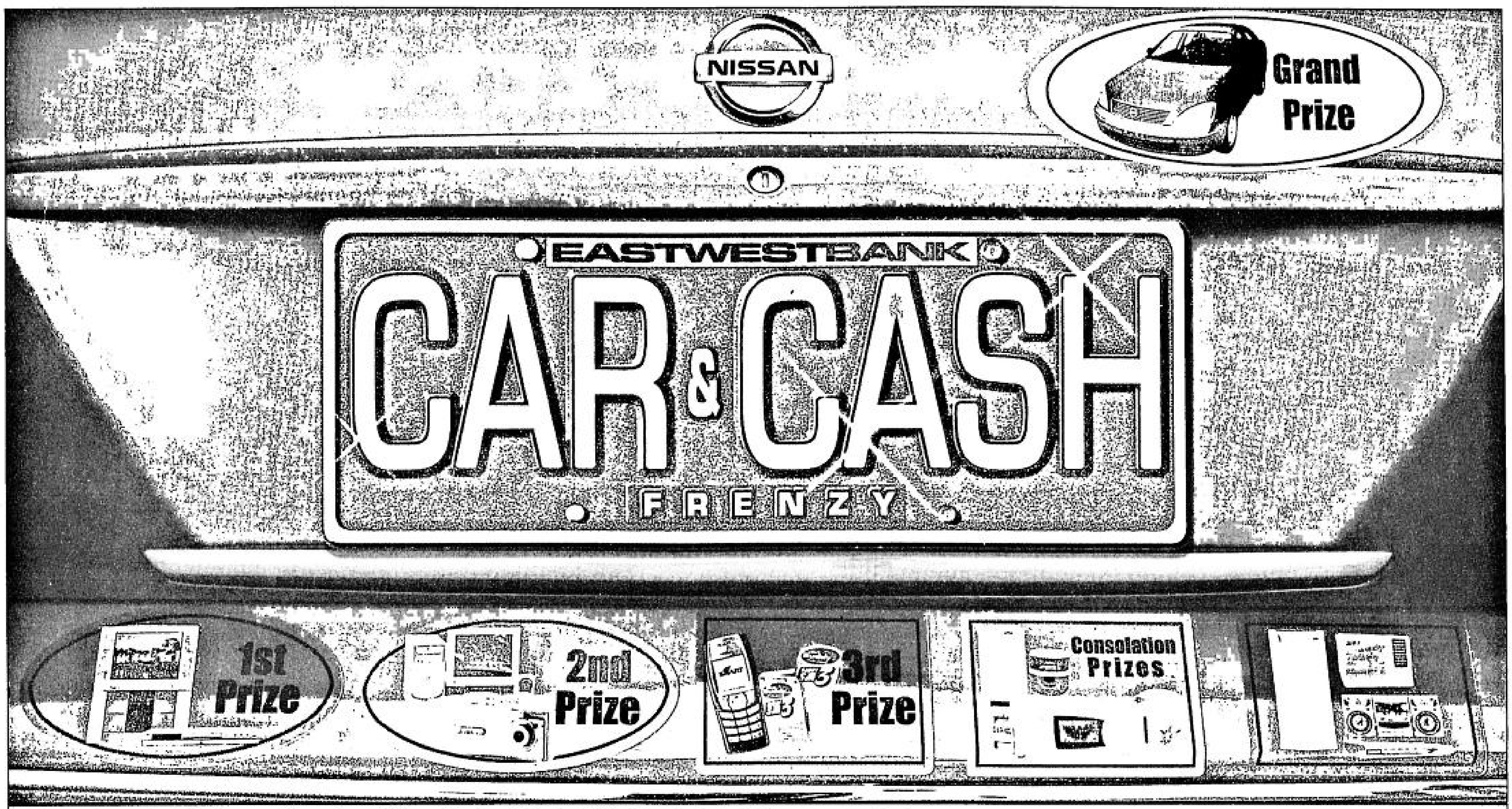

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DTI-NCR Permit No. 3392 Series of 2004

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On August 28th and 29th, the Isuzu Truck Attack will have the following program:

10:00 AM Exhibit Halls Open
11:00 AM Seminar A: Safety Issues with Conversions Guidelines for Body Applications
1:30 PM Seminar B: Road Regulations and Restrictions for Trucks and Buses
3:30 PM Seminar C: Direct Injection Diesel Technology
7:00 PM Exhibit Halls Closed

Hourly raffle draws and product presentations will be conducted.

Be part of this giant expo as Isuzu showcases its power lineup of trucks and buses.

Be at the Isuzu Truck Attack.

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Editor Louie C. Camino

Complaint vs Mother Lily probed

FERNANDO promises "judicious, fair" investigation. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE 2004 Metro Manila Film Festival executive committee is investigating the complaint that four of the final eight movies in the lineup of the December festival are produced by Lily Monteverde.

"You can rest assured that this issue will be decided judiciously and fairly by the Execom at the soonest possible time," Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, who is also chair of the festival's executive committee, said in a letter to MLR Films producer Jojie Alonso.

Fernando said the committee has written Monteverde about the investigation and has asked for a reply.

Alonso had said four of the movies in the final festival lineup—"Mano Po 3," "Aishite Imasu 1941," "Que Sera Sera," "Sigaw"—are "productions of the Monteverde group." "Que

COMPLAINT / C2

MONTEVERDE. Two entries, or four?

'She acted on her own,' says GMA 7 of 'column-feed' exec

By Jocelyn Valle, *Contributor* and Nini Valera

GMA Network said its publicist, Ma. Theresa "Tet" Defensor, had acted on her own and was not ordered to send out the column feed that attacked ABS-CBN host Kris Aquino.

"Ms Defensor acted on her own and was not instructed by anybody from GMA Network to commit the act of sending the material to columnists," said a statement sent by GMA 7 to INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday.

The statement was signed by lawyer Gene Asuncion.

"Unfortunately, her mistake has put GMA Network in a bad light," the statement said. "In the end, however, GMA Network believes that the truth will come out."

The column feed had prompted actress and TV host Aquino to file an P80-million libel suit against Defensor and her superiors at GMA Network, including its president, Felipe Gozon, executive vice president Jimmy Duavit, vice president for TV entertainment Wilma Galvante, and Defensor's immediate boss, Alfonso "Butch" Raquel Jr.

A column feed is an opinion or point of view which is offered to a newspaper or magazine writer or an Internet columnist to adopt as his own opinion.

In response to Aquino's libel suit, Defensor last Friday filed her counter-affidavit with the Makati Regional Trial Court.

In her affidavit, Defensor said she was instructed by Raquel and Galvante to distribute the column feed that was meant as a publicity material for the GMA 7 morning talk show "Sis," which is in the same time slot as Aquino's "Good Morning, Kris" on ABS-CBN.

Defensor accused her superiors of pressuring her to admit responsibility for the e-mailed column feed and of making her their "scapegoat."

"The column feed that is the subject of this libel suit was not my idea," Defensor said in her counter-affidavit. "The column feeds intended to promote the programs of GMA Network are ideas of the officers of the network and formed part of the network's operating policy."

She spoke on the controversy on "EK Channel," an ABS-CBN show, on Saturday afternoon.

"There are so many inconsistencies in Ms Defensor's affidavit," the GMA statement pointed out. "First, her claim that both Mr. Raquel and Ms Galvante handed the document to her with instructions to disseminate the said document to columnists is entirely untrue."

Voluntary signing

Although the GMA statement confirmed that Raquel indeed gave Defensor the column feed, it stressed that "she was not instructed to distribute the same (material) to columnists."

Raquel gave Defensor the liberty to decide whether to send out the column feed or not, according to the statement, which quoted Raquel as telling Defensor, "*Bahala ka na diyan*, Tet" (It's up to you to decide what to do with that).

GMA denied that Defensor was pressured

SHE ACTED/ C2

DE LA CRUZ JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

DID YOU KNOW...

KC Concepcion, eldest daughter of megastar **Sharon Cuneta**, quietly slipped out of the country to return to Paris, where she is in college in an American university. KC was seen at the dignitaries' lounge at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Monday night while waiting for her Air France flight. She was simply dressed in jeans and shirt.

Angelika takes a break from soaps /C7

Thank you for the music, Gary V /C8

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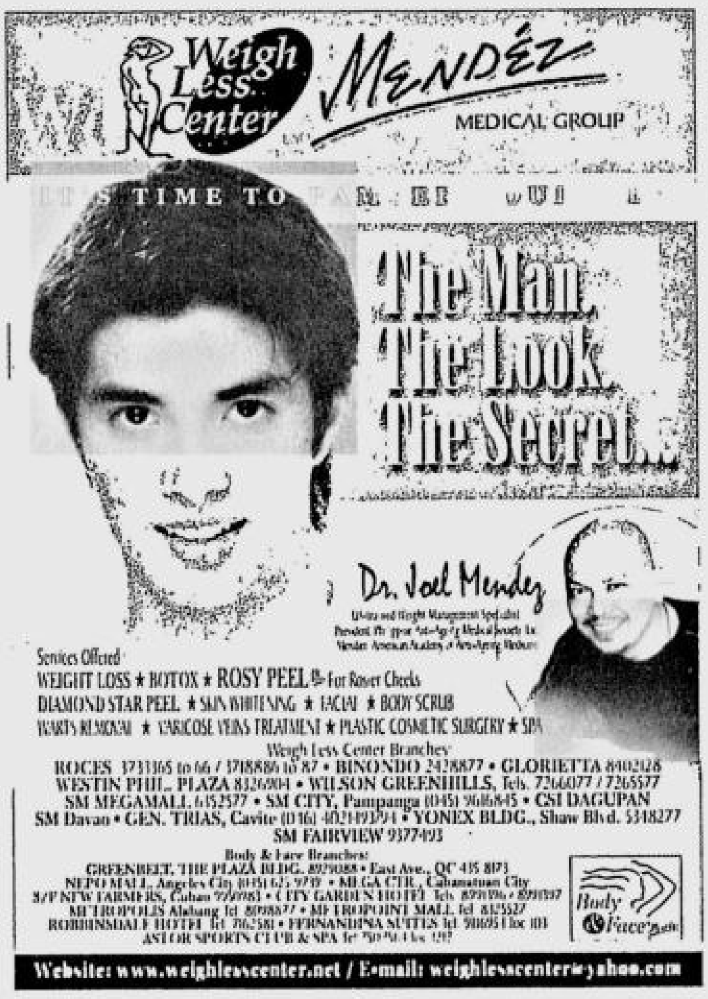

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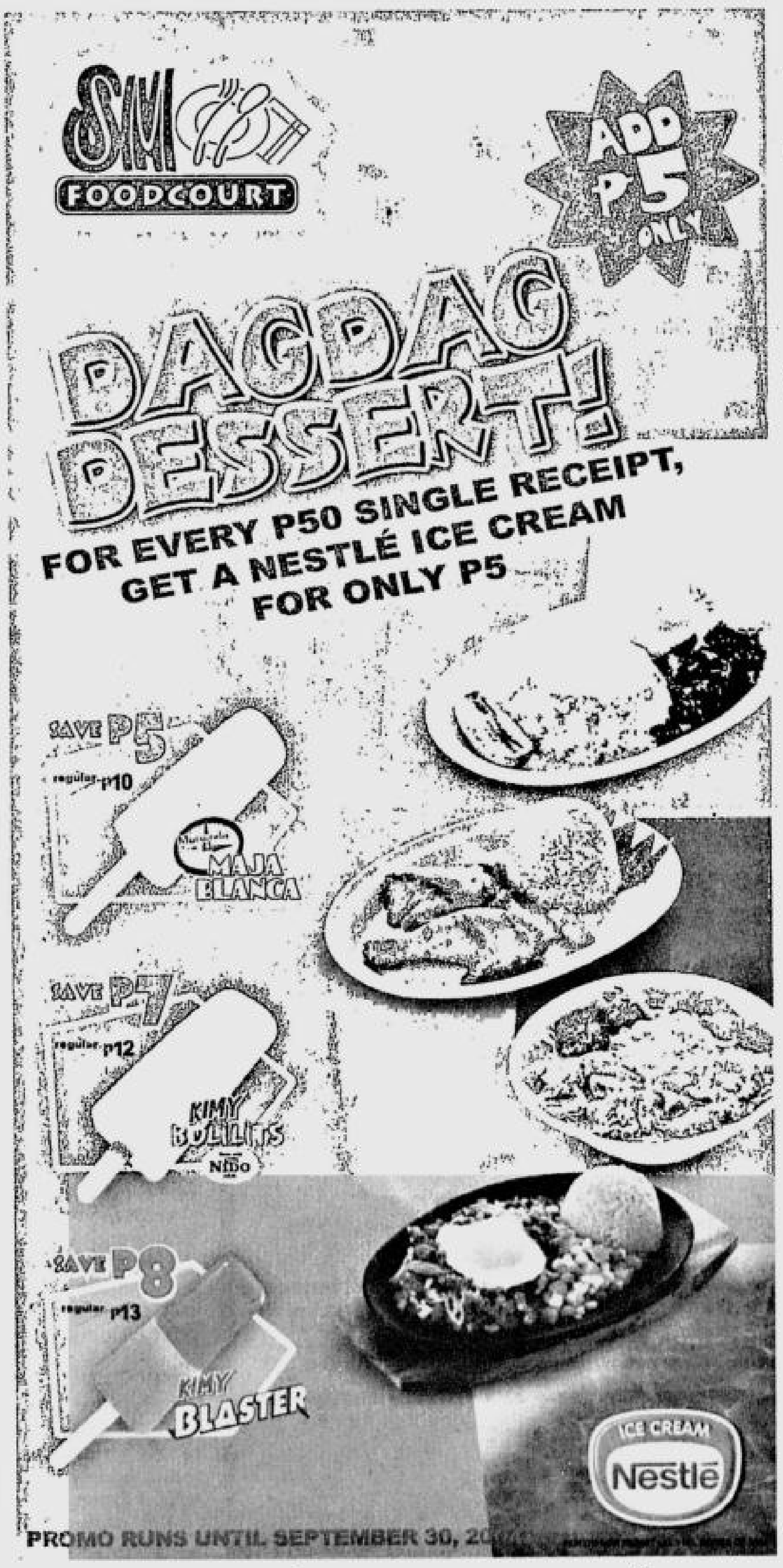

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4	GARFIELD	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	I, ROBOT		GUARANTEED SEATS COLLATERAL 1 10, 3 35, 6 00, 8 25, 10 50	PRINCE & ME
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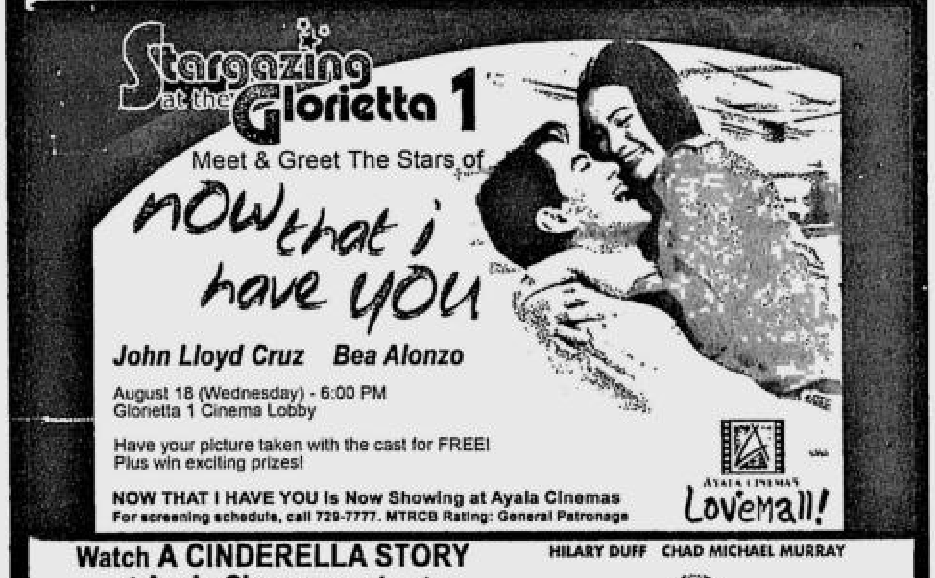

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AYALA MALLS
Lovemall!

Polishing your assets, hard drama and other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: What kinds of roles do you want to play in the movie?

Guest: *Gusto ko, yung* hard drama!

(Huh? There's hard action, but there's no such animal as hard drama!)

* * *

Hosts: Is it true *na* boyfriend *mo na ngayon si* (name of male starlet)?

Guest: No, he's just a friend, *pero inaamin ko,* we're getting to know each other.

(*Ay,* with each other!)

* * *

Host: Would you go for breast enhancement, like so many other sexy starlets?

Guest: Well, *kung mag*-enfrov *ang* personality *ko,* why not?

(*Palagay ko, wala nang* "enfrovement" *ang* personality *mo!*)

* * *

Host: Do you have any shows to plug?

Guest: Oh, yes, *magkakaroon kami ng* US store *sa susunod na buwan.*

(US store? US store? Oh, US tour! *Akala ko, naging tindera ka na sa* States.)

* * *

Host: What do you have to say, to defend yourself against the accusations of your ex-girlfriend?

Guest: No, I don't like to answer, too gentleman *ako* to say it.

(*Ay,* too gentleman *siya!*)

* * *

Host: Who are the richest stars?

Guest: Well, they don't reveal their income, so you just have to look at their faces. There are millions and millions of money on their faces, you see?

(No, we don't see!)

* * *

Host: How is the public responding to the new rules put out by your office?

Guest: Good! The new regulations elicited favorable responsible from the public.

(Favorable responsible *daw, o!*)

* * *

Host: Where did you get that hat?

Guest: From London, where we had a show.

Host: So, it's your souvenir of that visit?

Guest: Yes, I keep it as a momentum of London.

(Momentum? Oh, memento!)

* * *

Host: Isn't it amazing how much money you can win these days, just by joining the many contests and raffles on TV? One million pesos!

Co-host: Oh, so many—and the prizes are going up more! Actually, million ordinary on TV.

(*Ano raw? Parang* aborigine *kung magsalita...*)

* * *

Host: Do you like it when you get appreciative letters from your fans?

Guest: Of course, it will inspark us to do better!

(*Kunsabagay,* inspiration *does* give us that "spark"...)

* * *

Host: What do you want to say to your wife now? Go ahead, tell her.

Guest: No more need. Anyway, she knows *naman* so much I love her how!

(Not if you put it *that* way!)

* * *

Host: I have a *palaisipan* for our viewers: Why do some people are strong, and some are weak? And, why do some people are kind, and some are not so?

(Don't answer that—please!)

* * *

Host: Why do you wear the color red and yellow, and other bright colors, so often?

Guest: Because it gives me confident!

(*Sige na nga!*)

* * *

Host: You have a sexier figure now. What did you do?

Guest: I admit, I had smaller boobs before. But OK *lang.* Even small boobs is OK, because you can still polish your assets.

'Gundam Seed'

THE CARTOON Network's "Gundam Seed" (Toonami) airs Mondays at 7:30 p.m. In the show, humans have evolved into two forms, the "Naturals," who are normal humans, and the "Coordinators," who are genetically altered humans. A young "Coordinator" finds himself fighting his own people at first, but learns he is actually in the middle of a war between two genocidal governments.

'Close to Home'

IN STEVEN Nobile's acclaimed film "Closer to Home," Dalisay journeys from the Philippines to New York City to marry former merchant marine, Dean. He hopes to find love and start a new family as his American family disintegrates. For her part, Dalisay hopes to help her sister get well, and to provide a bright future for her debt-ridden family back home.

If you are interested in using this film to raise funds for your organization's projects, **Ms Eva Alvarez** will gladly send you a press kit and present a proposal to your group. Call cell (908) 764-4543, e-mail etalvarez8@yahoo.com, or visit www.elibonfilms.com.

A critic's notes on the film—**Michael Wilmington,** Chicago Tribune: "Another Green Card Romance—but this time, the broader canvas, in both the Philippines and the US, gives the story a wider emotional range and near epic feel."

'She acted on her own, says GMA 7 of 'column-feed' exec

From page C1

into signing a letter in which she took responsibility for the column feed.

"Ms Defensor signed the letter voluntarily and, in fact, her brother knew of this letter and was with Ms Defensor when Mr. Raquel discussed the matter with them after Ms Defensor signed the letter," the network's statement said.

"There was no objection raised by Ms Defensor or her brother either on the contents or on its voluntary execution," it added.

The GMA statement said Defensor sent the column feed using GMA's e-mail to several entertainment columnists on June 16, or two weeks after she got hold of the material.

"If she indeed received instructions to send the item, she would not have waited for two weeks before she complied with an order and would have sent the document on the same day," the statement said.

Apology

Abante columnist Jojo Gabinete had published the column feed in full on July 9, complete with Defensor's personal note, which said, "*Kapatid paki lang ng* boss *ko. Sana masingit niyo sa* column."

Three days later, Aquino filed the libel case against GMA 7 through her lawyer Sigfrid Fortun, who said "everything about (the column feed) breached the benchmark for libel."

GMA then issued a statement signed by Gozon and Duavit, in which they distanced themselves from Defensor and apologized to Aquino for "whatever inconvenience the item may have caused her."

The GMA statement said Galvante was in the US and Canada between

SHE/ C5

Complaint vs Mother Lily...

From page C1

Sera Sera" was identified as a production of Regal Entertainment and "Sigaw" of MegaVision.

The other finalists are Viva's "Lastikman," OctoArts' "Enteng Kabisote," "Bulong" from OctoArts satellite company Canary Films, and Cesar Montano's. "Panaghoy sa Suba."

'Unwise, impractical'

Alonso last week filed a complaint with the MMDA, saying the members of the MMFF executive committee "appear" to have adjusted rules and regulations "to favor certain producers over others." She cited what she called violations of the rules on deadline and casting, among others.

MLR Films had submitted "Minsan Pa," starring Jomari Yllana and Ara Mina, which did not qualify for the year-end festival.

Alonso said, "We still hope that Chairman Fernando will take action and nullify the entire selection process so as not to make the MMDA a party to this injustice."

In his letter to Alonso, Fernando pointed out that more movie producers couldn't have submitted entries to the film festival if the deadline had not been extended from the original July 1 to July 10, then to July 25.

Fernando said "it would have been unwise and impractical not to" move the deadline because, after the second deadline extension, "there were only 10 screenplays from which we could choose eight best screenplays."

'Hypocrisy'

Only three screenplays ("Minsan Pa," "Sa Pagkagat ng Dilim" and "Panaghoy sa Suba") had been submitted by July 1, according to the executive committee.

This prompted the committee to move the deadline to July 10, on which seven other entries were submitted.

But the deadline was moved again, this time to July 23. A final total of 27 screenplays were gathered.

MLR Films submitted its entry last June 23.

Fernando said in his letter that keeping other movie companies from presenting their screenplays "could have negated one of the main purposes of the festival, which is to encourage as many producers as possible to submit their film projects."

Alonso called Fernando's explanation "hypocrisy of the highest order."

"Not only is it an affront to the intelligence of the viewing public," Alonso said in a statement sent to INQUIRER Entertainment, "it tramples, insults and downgrades the work(s) of the writer(s) of the 10 submitted screenplays."

Juday cleared

In his letter, Fernando also cleared Judy Ann Santos of violating festival rules and regulation for appearing in two entries—MAQ Films' "Mano Po 3" and BasFilm Productions' "Aishite Imasu 1941."

Fernando explained that the festival rules allow an actor who is the lead star in one festival entry to appear in another entry in a supporting role.

"Please be informed that the lead actress of 'Mano Po 3' is Vilma Santos, and therefore all other actresses therein are considered supporting stars," Fernando pointed out in his letter.

"If Judy Ann Santos was mentioned as a lead star of 'Mano Po 3' it could have been an honest mistake by the production company."

MLR Films' "Minsan Pa," written by award-winning scriptwriter Armando "Bing" Lao, also features Marianne de la Riva, Tirso Cruz III, and Christian Vasquez.

In an interview with INQUIRER Entertainment on the set of "Minsan Pa" at the Basilica de Sto. Niño in Cebu City last Friday, Alonso said she is carefully studying the points that Fernando raised in his letter.

"I asked Bing (Lao) to do research and explain to me the responsibilities of a lead actress as opposed to a supporting actress," said Alonso. "He gave me a rundown.

"Because I am a lawyer, I want to fully understand my case," Alonso added. "I don't want to come out as someone who is merely sour-grapping."

Perpetuating irregularities

Alonso said "the MMDA executive committee has miserably failed to address the scarred integrity of the selection process. To simply continue as if everything was in order, without resolving the problem, is tantamount to perpetuating the irregularities, wittingly or unwittingly."

Alonso filed her complaint after movie producers Vic del Rosario, Violet Sevilla, Tony Gloria and director Joey Javier Reyes aired their disappointment over the film festival executive committee's selection of the final eight movies.

"I'm not in a position to criticize the executive committee," Reyes had told INQUIRER Entertainment in an earlier interview. "I don't exactly know how they choose the Magic 8. What I feel sad about is that it's as if the film fest is veering away from its goal of saving the dying local movie industry.

"She cannot deny that she has four entries," Del Rosario had said of Monteverde. "The whole industry knows she has four film festival entries, and that's very unfair to the other producers."

Ruling affirmed on illegal use of GMA 7 video by ABS

THE COURT of Appeals has affirmed the ruling of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, which earlier found ABS-CBN guilty of copyright infringement for the unauthorized use of a GMA Network exclusive video in 1995, according to GMA.

In its decision dated Aug. 6, 2004, the Court of Appeals, through the order of Associate Justice Juan Q. Enriquez Jr. and concurred in by Associate Justices Salvador J. Valdez and Vicente Q. Roxas, sided with the RTC ruling that ABS-CBN "failed to ask permission in broadcasting" a GMA Network exclusive video of an interview with Vivialyn Dungca.

That interview was aired on the program "Eye to Eye" on Oct. 12, 1995, according to a GMA statement.

ABS-CBN had aired the video in the "Star News" segment of its news program, "TV Patrol," on the same day. The words "Eye to Eye Exclusive," which were superimposed on the GMA 7 video, were covered by a red bar.

ABS-CBN admitted to the use of the video but denied that it "conspicuously concealed the words 'Eye to Eye Exclusive.'" ABS-CBN claimed it was merely a computer error.

ABS-CBN also claimed the interview "constitutes a news item or an editorial on current political, economic or religious topics" which may be legally reproduced by the press for broadcast.

The regional trial court ruled on July 20, 2002 that ABS-CBN "failed to (identify) GMA Network as the source" of the video.

The regional trial court also said that ABS-CBN's excuse that the red bar appearing on the portion of the video aired by ABS-CBN was a computer error was too "flimsy to be given credence."

In its appeal, ABS-CBN argued that the video clip had no copyright notice stating the name of the copyright owner and the year of its first publication.

ABS-CBN also claimed that GMA Network had no right to enforce the copyright of the video footage since GMA Network was not the owner of said copyright.

ABS-CBN also argued that since the video footage was a news item, the consent of GMA Network was not necessary.

The Court of Appeals disagreed and said ABS-CBN violated Section 52 of P.D. 49, on neighboring rights, which "protects the interests of performers, producers of phonograms, and broadcasting organizations in relation to their activities in connection with the public use of authors' works, all kinds of artists' presentations or the communication to the public of events, information and any sounds or images."

ABS-CBN, according to the Court of Appeals, not only failed to obtain the consent of GMA Network but also did not state the source of the news item in their newscast, which are important requirements under the law.

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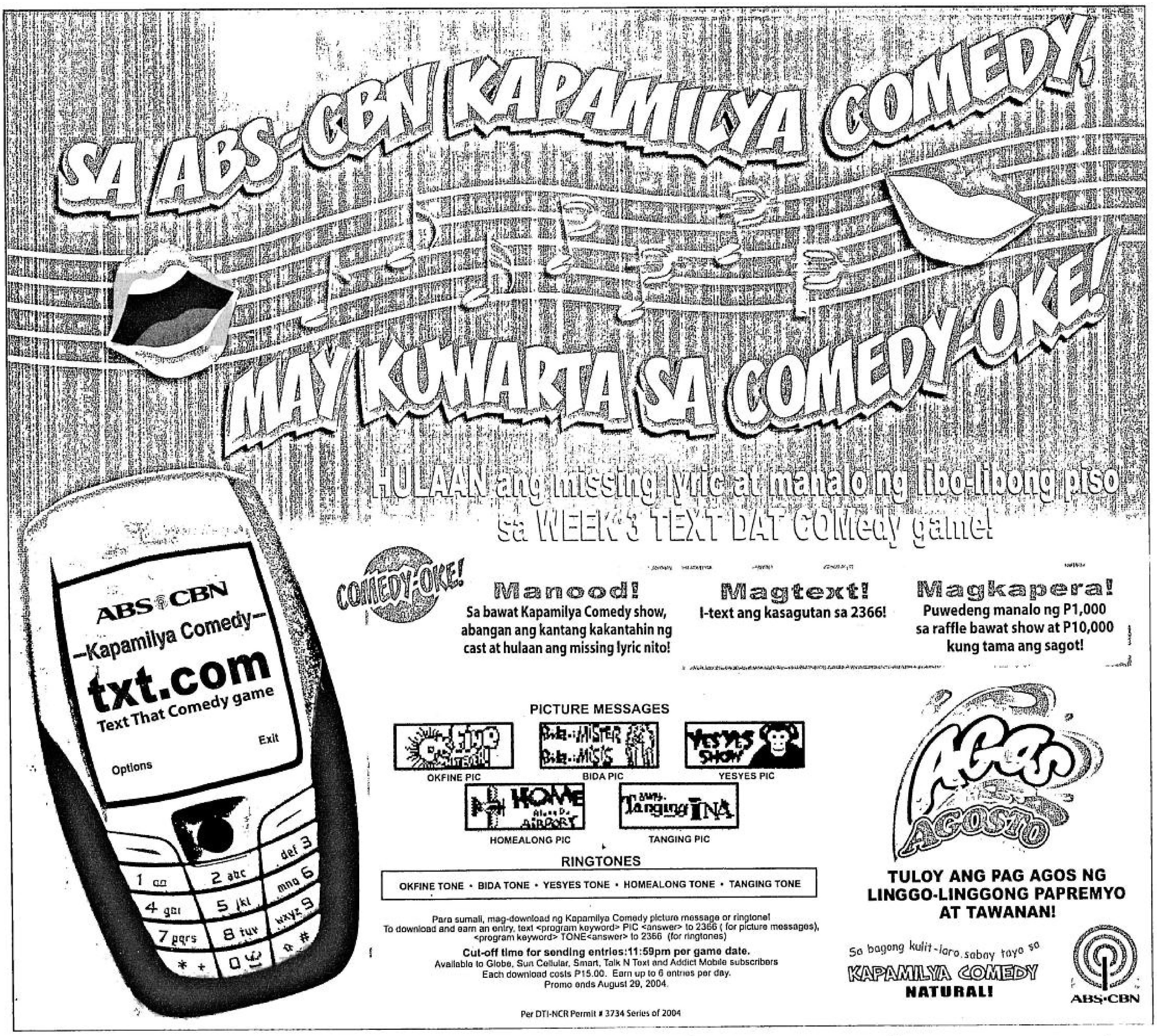
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Thank you for the music . . .

From page C8

THANKFUL. After 40 years, Gary has much to be thankful for.
PHOTO BY VIC VALENCIANO

release a book of Gary's photos from the time he started in show biz, Gary sang another song.

Friends and children

With The Manouevres dance group, Gary relived his past concerts, with unbelievable exact timing and precise footwork. This had been done in "XX-treme," his 20th anniversary concert also at the Big Dome last November.

The dance and percussion showdown of Gary with his son Gabriel in "Hataw Na" was from the Music Museum concert series, "By Request."

The gospel tune, "Friends are Friends Forever," was accompanied by photographs of the celebrities who have become his friends through the years: Aga Muhlach, Kuh Ledesma, Jaya, Jojo Lastimosa, Martin Nievera, Mon Faustino, Rowell Santiago, Zsa Zsa Padilla, among many others.

Another gospel tune, "People Need the Lord," showed Gary in several outreach programs all over the country, in his role as Unicef ambassador.

"Warrior is a Child" featured a video of Gary's nephews and nieces, including Sharon Cuneta's 3-year-old Frankie. The megastar is married to Gary's brother-in-law, Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan, who was in the audience that night.

"Thankful" was perhaps the Gary concert with the most guest performers. In one number, Gary sang and danced with the talented Siga Youth for Christ Kids, composed of teenagers from Christian churches and communities like Jesus is Lord, Community Christian Fellowship, Victory Christian Fellowship and New Life Christian Fellowship.

Most beautiful

The most striking and beautiful number in the show was when Gary sang "We Are the Reason," a popular gospel tune, with the Jubilee Evangelical Hand Mimers providing a colorful and awesome background that elicited oohs and ahhhs from the audience. This had also been done in one of Jamie Rivera's music videos, but the effect of the mime on Gary's number was simply mesmerizing.

Gary's biggest celebrity guest that night was Piolo Pascual, who undoubtedly attracted a big horde of his own followers to the Big Dome. Gary V and Piolo P sang the hit ballad, "Kailangan Kita," which Gary recorded for Aga Muhlach's romantic starrer of the same title with Claudine Barretto. Another hit movie theme which Gary sang that night was "How Did You Know," from another Aga Muhlach hit, "All My Life," with Kristine Hermosa.

Among the celebrities who watched "Thankful" were Aga and wife Charlene Gonzales, Zsa Zsa, Bernadette Sembrano, Marjorie Barretto, Candy Pangilinan and Maricris Bermont. ABS-CBN's new president, Luis "Cito" Alejandro, also came to watch the show.

Gary V, for the first time, is a host on the Sunday TV show, "Asap Mania."

As he now marks his 21st year in show biz, he finds he has other reasons to be thankful for.

---

movietime
SM CINEMA

NOW SHOWING

Central

SM MEGAMALL 6331901

1	CATWOMAN
2	COLLATERAL
3	THE VILLAGE
4	I, ROBOT
5	CINDERELLA STORY
6	ETERNAL SUNSHINE
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
8	IMELDA
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	GARFIELD
11	ELLA ENCHANTED
12	DEAD PEOPLE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	I, ROBOT
2	CATWOMAN
3	THE ALAMO
4	COLLATERAL
5	CINDERELLA STORY
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	THE VILLAGE
8	GARFIELD
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	ELLA ENCHANTED
11	DEAD PEOPLE
12	IMELDA

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	CINDERELLA STORY
2	IMELDA
3	CATWOMAN
4	THE VILLAGE
5	GARFIELD
6	COLLATERAL
7	I, ROBOT
8	ELLA ENCHANTED
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	ALONG CAME POLLY
11	DEAD PEOPLE
12	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	I, ROBOT
2	CINDERELLA STORY
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	CATWOMAN
5	GARFIELD
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	COLLATERAL
8	THE VILLAGE

SM CITY STA. MESA 7149522 • 7161416

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	CATWOMAN
3	THE VILLAGE
4	DEAD PEOPLE
5	COLLATERAL
6	ELLA ENCHANTED
7	GARFIELD
8	THE ALAMO
9	CINDERELLA STORY
10	I, ROBOT

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN 2514302

1	COLLATERAL
2	THE VILLAGE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	DEAD PEOPLE

North

SM CITY MARILAO (044) 933 2013 to 17

1	GARFIELD
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	CATWOMAN
4	THE VILLAGE

SM CITY PAMPANGA 7128015

1	THE VILLAGE
2	GARFIELD
3	CATWOMAN
4	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
5	DEAD PEOPLE
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

SM CITY BAGUIO (074) 4464505

1	COLLATERAL
2	THE VILLAGE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

South

SM CITY LAS PIÑAS 8066888

1	GARFIELD
2	CINDERELLA STORY
3	THE VILLAGE
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	ELLA ENCHANTED
6	DEAD PEOPLE
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
8	COLLATERAL
9	CATWOMAN
10	I, ROBOT

SM CITY BICUTAN 7763055

1	THE VILLAGE
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	GARFIELD
4	CINDERELLA STORY

SM SUPER CENTER SUCAT 8294975

1	GARFIELD
2	THE VILLAGE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	CINDERELLA STORY

SM CITY BACOOR (046)4173868

1	DEAD PEOPLE
2	GARFIELD
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	THE VILLAGE
5	CATWOMAN
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	COLLATERAL
8	CINDERELLA STORY

SM CITY DASMA (046) 4323201-04

1	THE VILLAGE
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	CATWOMAN
4	GARFIELD

SM CITY LUCENA (042) 7100977-80

1	PRINCE & ME
2	KING ARTHUR
3	WEREWOLF (GINGERSNAPS 2)
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

Visayas & Mindanao

SM CITY CEBU (032) 2313876

1	IMELDA
2	WHOLE 10 YARDS
3	GARFIELD
4	PRINCE & ME
5	ELLA ENCHANTED
6	CATWOMAN
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
8	COLLATERAL

SM CITY ILOILO (033) 3209422

1	COLLATERAL
2	RESERVED
3	KING ARTHUR
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	PRINCE & ME
6	CATWOMAN
7	RESERVED
8	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

SM CITY DAVAO (082) 2976998

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	HAUNTED SPIRIT
3	PRINCE & ME
4	CATWOMAN
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6	COLLATERAL

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8592884

1	ALONG CAME POLLY
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
4	PRINCE & ME

—THE—
PODIUM
CINEMA

1
COLLATERAL
11:50 FS/12:25 MF/3:05/5:45/8:25/10:25 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:05 END

2
CINDERELLA STORY
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/10:25 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:35 END

For Seat Reservation, call 633 8976
LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS

Opens August 4 at SM Cinemas
MTRCB Rating G

Watch Garfield at SM Cinema for a chance to take him home with you!

ll purchase a Garfield movie ticket from any of our participating outlets* to get 1 SM Coupon with a unique 6-digit text code ranging from 100001 to 500000. Mobile subscribers** must affix a signature to the SM coupon after sending out text codes.

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11 Garfield life-size stuff toys

Promo period is from August 7 - 14 only. Grand Draw is on Aug. 18, 2004.

*Participating Branches: Bacoor, Bicutan, Fairview, Manila, Megamall, North Edsa, Sta Mesa, Southmall, Sucat, Tutuban, Dasmarinas, Cavite, Pampanga and Cebu
**This promo is exclusive to Smart Kal, Gold, Buddy, Infinity, Addict and Talk 'n Text Subscribers and SM Cinema moviegoers only

KEEP WATCHING GARFIELD

Buy 4 tickets to see the movie, Garfield to get exciting premium giveaways such as 1 mini-poster of Garfield, 1 storyland coupons* and 1 FREE one hour ice time coupons*.

Promo period is on August 4, 7 and 8, 2004 at the following SM Branches: Megamall, North Edsa, Southmall, Manila, Sta. Mesa, Fairview, Bacoor, Sucat, Bicutan, Tutuban, Dasmarinas, Pampanga and Cebu

*These premium item giveaways are available at all SM Cinema branches except Pampanga, Cebu, Baguio, Lucena, Iloilo, Davao, Cagayan de Oro and Marilao

See flyers for details
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1491, Series of 2004

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171

1 (DOLBY)	GARFIELD GP / FS : 12:15 PM, 2:25 PM, 4:35 PM, 6:45 PM, LMF : 8:55 PM
2 (DOLBY)	COLLATERAL R-13
3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE PG-13 / FS : 12:45 PM, 3:20 PM, 5:55 PM, LMF : 8:40 PM
4 (DOLBY)	CINDERELLA STORY GP / FS : 12:15 PM, 2:30 PM, 4:45 PM, 7:00 PM, LMF : 9:15 PM

PREMIERE

(DOLBY)	SYLVIA R-13 / FS : 12:15 PM, 2:25 PM, 4:35 PM, 6:45 PM, LMF : 8:55 PM

isetann SUPER CINERAMA
CINERAMA COMPLEX RECTO
tel 733.4238

1. (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
2.	COLLATERAL
3.	KARELASYON
4.	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5.	A CINDERELLA STORY

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	KARELASYON
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	A CINDERELLA STORY
4 (SDDS)	MAKAMUNDO
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6 (DOLBY)	COLLATERAL
7 (DTS)	THE VILLAGE
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	THE VILLAGE
3	KARELASYON

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	THE VILLAGE
5	KARELASYON

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	DEAD PEOPLE
2	KARELASYON
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	CATWOMAN
5 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
6	COLLATERAL

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	HOT SPOT
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	CATWOWAN
2 (SDDS)	THE VILLAGE
3 (DTS)	GARFIELD
4 GOLD (DTS)	A CINDERELLA STORY
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
6 GOLD (SDDS)	COLLATERAL
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	ELLA ENCHANTED
8 (RMS)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
9 (RMS)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10 (RMS)	I - ROBOT

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
ALI MALL CINEPLEX
Tel. 911-3101 loc. 8242 / 8281 / 8397

3 (Dolby)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (SDDS)	COLLATERAL
5 (DTS)	THE VILLAGE
6 (Dolby)	KA-RELASYON
7 (Dolby)	CINDERELLA STORY

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	THE VILLAGE
3	KARELASYON
4	A CINDERELLA STORY

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 (DTS EX)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	CATWOMAN
3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
4 (DTS)	GARFIELD

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	CATWOMAN
2	I - ROBOT
3 (DOLBY)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (DTS)	HAUNTED SPIRIT

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	ELLA ENCHANTED
2	I - ROBOT

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
2 (DOLBY)	A CINDERELLA STORY
3 (DOLBY)	GARFIELD
4 (DOLBY)	COLLATERAL

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	MAKAMUNDO
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 (DTS)	THE VILLAGE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	GARFIELD
2 (DTS)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
4	COLLATERAL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
3 (DTS)	GARFIELD
4	COLLATERAL

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	I - ROBOT
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 (DOLBY)	CATWOMAN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	ALONG CAME POLLY
3 (DOLBY)	CATWOMAN
4 (DTS)	I - ROBOT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3327

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	GARFIELD
3 (DOLBY)	CATWOMAN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	DEAD PEOPLE
2	KARELASYON
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (DTS)	MAKAMUNDO

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 (DTS)	GARFIELD
4	MAKAMUNDO
5	COLLATERAL

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
2	BEAUTIFUL LIFE
3 (DTS)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (DOLBY)	ALONG CAME POLLY

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	KAINAN
2	WEREWOLF (GINGER SNAP - 2)
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	A CINDERELLA STORY

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	KARELASYON

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Sheryn Regis wins in Voice of Asia

ONLINE FAVORITE. Regis also topped the competition's online voting.

SHOW STOPPER

STAR Records recording artist Sheryn Regis bagged the second prize in the recent Voice of Asia 2004 in Kazakhstan, besting 14 other contenders from different nations.

This is the first major international competition for Sheryn, who was the first runner-up in ABS-CBN's hit talent search, "Star in a Million," last January. Erik Santos was the champion of "Star in a Million."

Sheryn won a cash prize of $3,000 and a trophy in the Kazakhstan contest.

Sheryn also emerged as the top favorite in the online voting, garnering as much as 85 percent of the votes, with the rest of the 15 percent divided among the other participants.

Sheryn was among the youngest performers in the competition which took three nights. The grand prize went to the singer from Romania.

Regis sang the love song "Now That I Have You," written by Trina Belamide, on the first night, "Sana'y Di Pangarap," by Vehnee Saturno, on the second night, and the power ballad "Follow Your Dream," by Vehnee and Popsie Saturno, on the third and final night.

The competition was held from Aug. 6 to 9. It has been one of the most prestigious international singing competitions since 1990, with professional and veteran international performers participating.

Sheryn has launched her debut album from Star Records, "Come In Out of the Rain," whose singles have been high on the ratings charts.

Grand tradition of love teams continues with John Lloyd, Bea

DATE TRAIN. John Lloyd and Bea play commuters who meet on the MRT.

STAR Cinema, the home of wholesome entertainment, continues to present movies for the family, most of them featuring love teams in the tradition of Rogelio de la Rosa and Carmen Rosales, Gloria Romero and Luis Gonzales, and Susan Roces and Eddie Gutierrez.

Star Cinema has been successfully experimenting by teaming up unlikely partners, such as Aga Muhlach and Sharon Cuneta in "Kung Ako na Lang Sana," Aga and Claudine Barretto in "Kailangan Kita," Aga and Kristine Hermosa in "All My Life," Claudine and Piolo Pascual in "Milan," and Ai Ai delas Alas and three men (Tonton Gutierrez, Jestoni Alarcon and Edu Manzano) in "Tanging Ina."

All those movies were blockbusters.

Star Cinema has been grooming the love team of John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo, first seen on the top-rated soap "Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay" and then on "It Might Be You" and, on the big screen, in "My First Romance" with John Prats and Heart Evangelista.

In their latest team-up, "Now That I Have You," directed by Laurenti Dyogi from a screenplay by Joey Javier Reyes, John Lloyd and Bea play MRT commuters who bump into each other and fall in love.

The two young stars admitted that in the beginning, they didn't feel comfortable working with each other.

"John Lloyd would keep to himself in one corner during taping breaks," recalled Bea. "He's a loner."

John Lloyd was then going steady with Ciara Sotto. They broke up several months ago, which broke John Lloyd's heart.

"I must admit that Bea was a big help in my recovery," said John Lloyd. "I'm more open now. I feel comfortable with her now. I guess we have found our common wavelength."

In "Now That I Have You," John Lloyd and Bea are opposites who are attracted to each other. Will the same thing happen in real life?

"Now That I Have You" also stars Nikki Valdez, Kristopher Peralta, Lui Villaruz, Jojit Lorenzo, Noel Colet and Cholo Escaño.

DANGER ZONE

JOSH FOR CENTER FOR POP
The Center for Pop Music Philippines Inc. will present its students in a production concert titled "Basta't Pinoy" on Sunday, Aug. 22, at 6 p.m., at the Philamlife Theater along UN Avenue, Manila, in celebration of Buwan ng Wika. "Basta't Pinoy" highlights Pinoy culture and traditions through pop songs and dances. Josh Santana (inset), a product of the Center for Pop, is featured in the concert. "Basta't Pinoy" is directed and hosted by Center for Pop Music Philippines president Butch Albarracin.

'She acted on her own,' says GMA 7...

From page C2

May 19 and June 10. "The documents presented by Ms Defensor in her affidavit with marginal notes from Mr. Raquel and Ms Galvante with dates June 23 and June 24, which are samples of alleged column feeds, and which she showed on TV, are merely routine publicity materials that GMA officers normally sign. The said items have no relation whatsoever to the e-mail sent by Ms Defensor to Jojo Gabinete on June 16 and are not derogatory in nature."

'You turned around'

Another network statement, which was aired on "StarTalk" also last Saturday, said that during her meetings with Raquel after Aquino had filed the libel case, Defensor had name-dropped ABS-CBN vice president Eric Santos and boasted about his text messages to her, supposedly offering her a job with ABS-CBN's San Francisco, California office. It also described Defensor's dates, documents and claims as lies.

"You're lying," said a voiceover reading the statement in Filipino, which was aired as a scrawl. "This is not only a blatant lie, but a despicable distortion of truth.

"Tet Defensor, you know you are the one who turned around and left other people hanging," the statement said on "StarTalk."

It also pointed out that Defensor was still an employee of the network, "a *kapuso*, a human being," even if it questioned her actions against GMA 7.

'Who's she fooling?'

Short of saying that she did not know Defensor, a former newspaper journalist, Galvante said she had no dealings with Defensor, whose office was a few floors below her office at the GMA building in Quezon City.

"I never had meetings with her, nor did I give her instructions," Galvante told INQUIRER Entertainment. "She has been with us only four months, and she's not a member of my staff."

Defensor joined the network last March as an officer with her own responsibility and accountability, according to the statement aired on "StarTalk."

"She has full responsibility for what she did (sending the e-mail). She was in control of her decision and was coerced by no one. Who is she fooling?"

ASIA'S EROTIC PHENOMENON
Jandara
A STORY OF SEX, GUILT AND RETRIBUTION

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
proudly brings you the exclusive screening of
ASIA'S EROTIC PHENOMENON
Jandara
at Robinsons Movieworld
Galleria and Ermita on August 18

CAST:
Viapavee Charoenpua, Christy Chung, Suwinit Panjamawat

SYNOPSIS:
Jan Dara is a film set in the moody and turbulent Thailand of the 1930s. Jan Dara is the name of a Thai young man whose earliest memories recall his own father having sex with his childhood nanny. In this lopsided and obsessive world. At the tender age of thirteen, he was cast out of his comfortable but troubled household after his stepsister accused him of rape. Years later Jan Dara returns home to seek revenge on his father by outdoing his father's sexual conquests and making him be witness to his triumphs.

MTRCB Rating: R18

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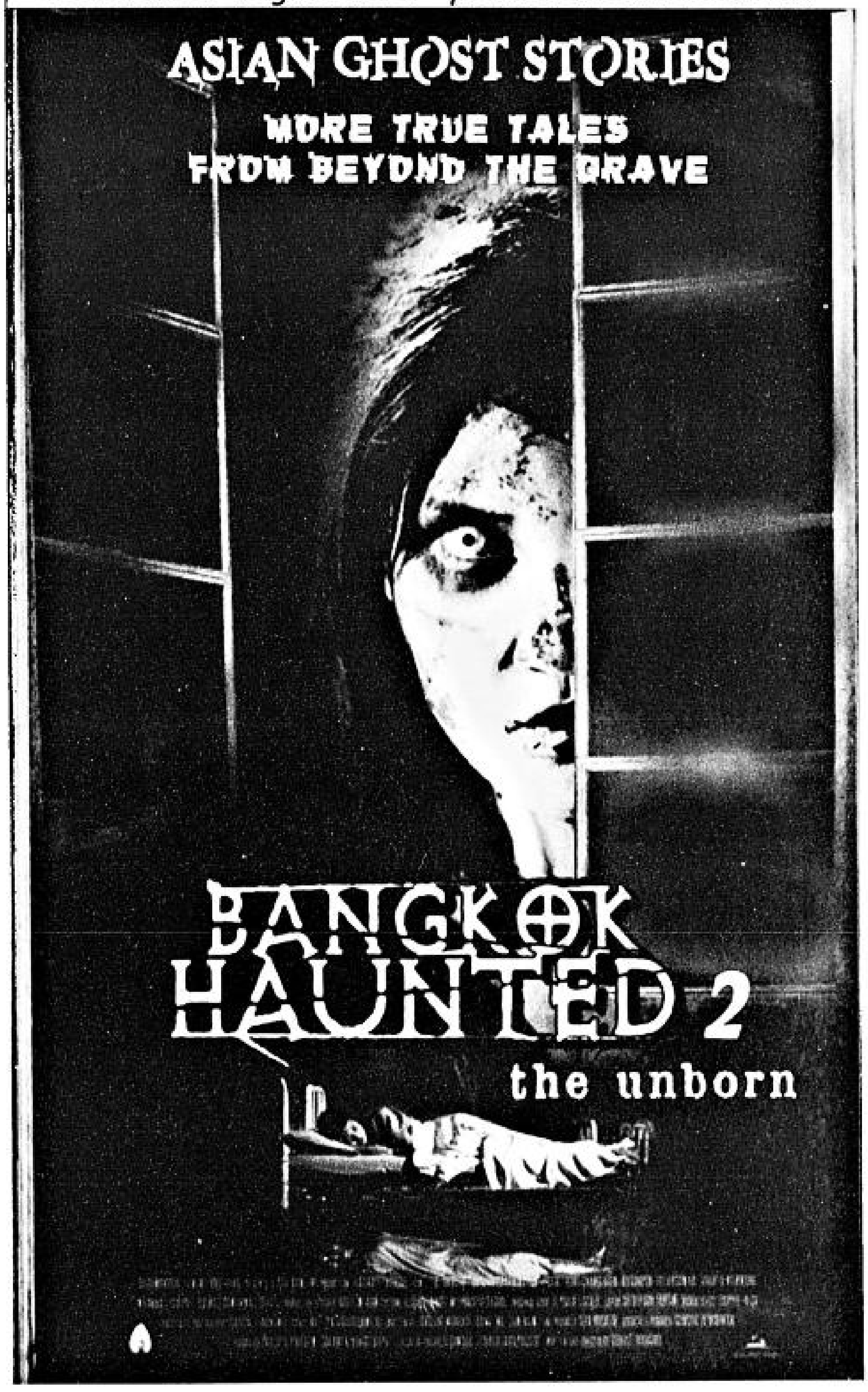
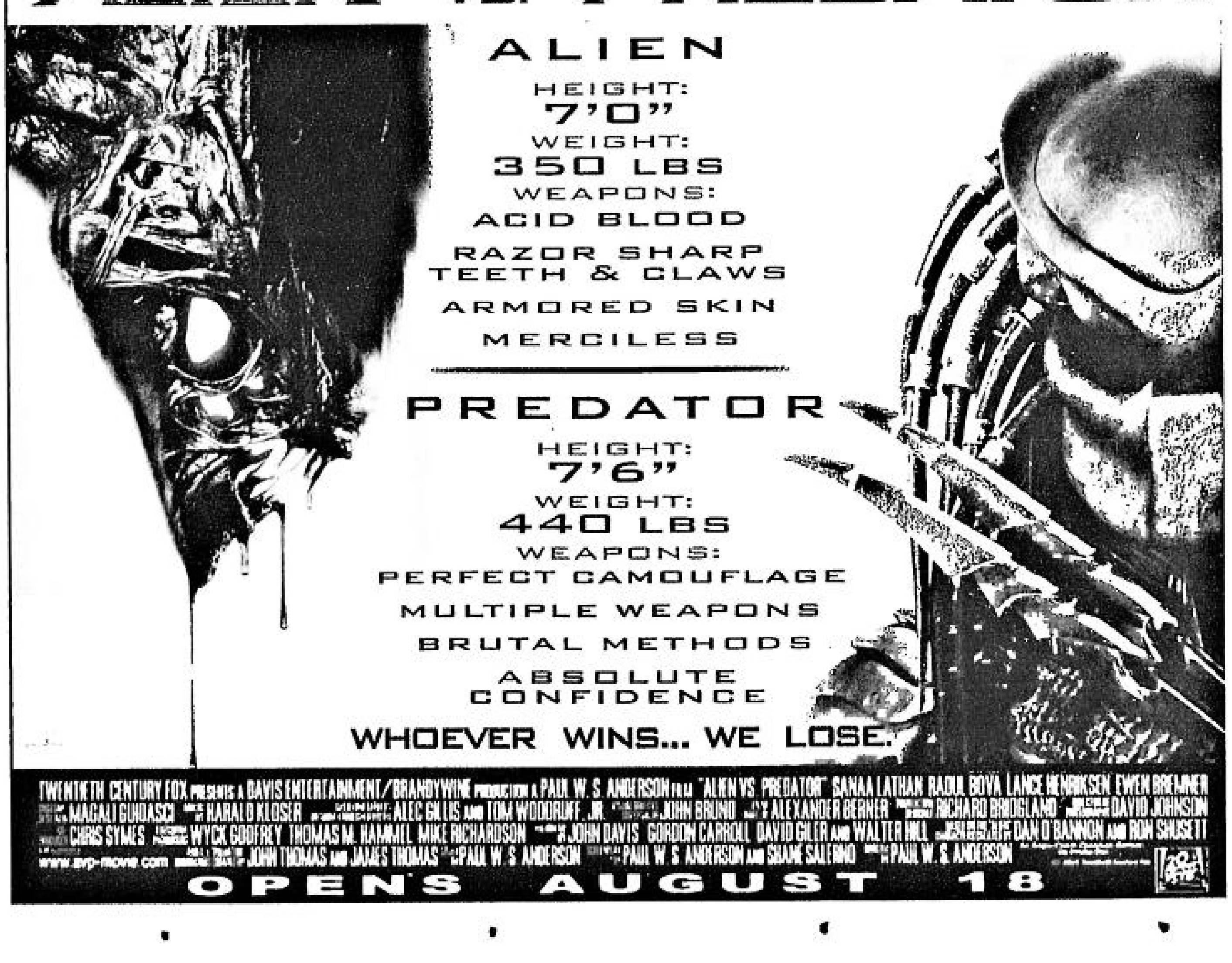
OPENS AUGUST 18
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
Don't sleep alone, don't switch off the lights at night,
Real terror begins after you watched this movie.




ALIEN vs. PREDATOR
ALIEN
HEIGHT:
7'0"
WEIGHT:
350 LBS
WEAPONS:
ACID BLOOD
RAZOR SHARP TEETH & CLAWS
ARMORED SKIN
MERCILESS
PREDATOR
HEIGHT:
7'6"
WEIGHT:
440 LBS
WEAPONS:
PERFECT CAMOUFLAGE
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WHOEVER WINS... WE LOSE.
TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX PRESENTS A DAVIS ENTERTAINMENT/BRANDYWINE PRODUCTION A PAUL W. S. ANDERSON FILM "ALIEN VS. PREDATOR" SANAA LATHAN RAOUL BOVA LANCE HENRIKSEN EWEN BREMNER MAGALI GUIDASCI HARALD KLOSER ALEC GILLIS AND TOM WOODRUFF, JR. JOHN BRUNO ALEXANDER BERNER RICHARD BRIDGLAND DAVID JOHNSON CHRIS SYMES WYCK GODFREY THOMAS M. HAMMEL MIKE RICHARDSON JOHN DAVIS GORDON CARROLL DAVID GILER AND WALTER HILL DAN O'BANNON AND RON SHUSETT JOHN THOMAS AND JAMES THOMAS PAUL W. S. ANDERSON PAUL W. S. ANDERSON AND SHANE SALERNO PAUL W. S. ANDERSON
www.avp-movie.com
OPENS AUGUST 18

Erik Santos in PMPC show

YOUNG balladeer Erik Santos will be the featured artist in the Philippine Movie Press Club's fundraising show at Zirkoh Comedy Bar along Timog Avenue in Quezon City on Aug. 18, at 9 p.m. His special guest is comedy concert queen Ai Ai de las Alas.

Erik was the grand prize winner in the first edition of ABS-CBN's "Star in a Million." He has released his first solo album from Star Records, aptly titled "This Is The Moment." He is set to release "Di Ko Kaya" by Vehnee Saturno, the second single from the album.

For booking inquiries, call Backroom at 435-1108, 435-1120, 435-1120, 435-1098, 435-3808, or fax inquiries to 928-0717.

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Annual National Consumer's Quality Award 2003

Family Consumers Choice Award 2003

NOW SHOWING

GALLERIA

632-9115 to 16

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
CINEMA 1 THX	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:45, 4:20, 6:55, 9:30
2	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:30, 12:25, 2:20, 4:15, 6:10, 8:05, 10:00
3	GARFIELD	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
4	COLLATERAL	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9.50
6	THE VILLAGE	11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
7	SYLVIA	11:00, 1:20, 3:30, 5.40, 7:50, 10:00
8	ETERNAL SUNSHINE	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9	CATWOMAN	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
10	I, ROBOT	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA

536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00
2	GARFIELD	11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 6:30, 7:35, 9:40
3	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10.00
4	ETERNAL SUNSHINE	11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:40
5	DEAD PEOPLE	11:15, 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
7	COLLATERAL	10:10, 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:00

METRO EAST

682-8193/99 / 682-8280

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	I, ROBOT	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00
2	CATWOMAN	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
3	THE VILLAGE	12:15, 2.50, 5.25, 8.00, 10:35
4	COLLATERAL	10:45, 1:15, 3:45, 6.15, 9.00
5	GARFIELD	10.50, 12.50, 2.50, 4.50, 6.50, 9.00
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:10, 12:40, 3:10, 5:40, 8.10, 10:35
7	A CINDERELLA STORY	10.50, 12.50, 2.50, 4.50, 6.50, 9.00
8	KARELASYON	10.50, 12.50, 2.50, 4.50, 6.50, 9.00

NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW

935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	COLLATERAL	12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
2	THE VILLAGE	10:20, 12:25, 2:30, 4:35, 6:40, 8:45
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:15, 12.45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:30
4	GARFIELD	10:30, 12:10, 1:50, 3:30, 5 10, 6.50, 8:30
5	A CINDERELLA STORY	11:00, 1:20, 3.40, 6.00, 8.30
6	CATWOMAN	11:00 1:25, 3 50, 6.15 8:40
7	KARELASYON	11:00, 12:55 2.50, 4:45, 6 40, 8:35
8	I, ROBOT	11:00, 1:15, 3 30

Citisquare MALABON

288-0985/2575

1	COLLATERAL
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	A CINDERELLA STORY
4	THE VILLAGE

CAINTA

240-4661

1	THE VILLAGE
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	A CINDERELLA STORY
4	COLLATERAL

STA. ROSA

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1	COLLATERAL
2	GARFIELD
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	THE VILLAGE
5	MAKAMUNDO

LIPA

757-3664 / 312-5870

1	WEREWOLF
2	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
3	A CINDERELLA STORY
4	KAINAN SA HIGHWAY
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

DASMARIÑAS

852-2125 / 416-4332

1	COLLATERAL
2	THE VILLAGE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	MAKAMUNDO
5	WEREWOLF

STARMILLS

875-1927 / 961-5270

1	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
2	PERLAS
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	DEAD PEOPLE
5	SPARTAN
6	THE VILLAGE

IMUS

471-8188 / 875-5858

1	COLLATERAL
2	ETERNAL SUNSHINE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	THE VILLAGE
5	KARELASYON
6	A CINDERELLA STORY

BACOLOD

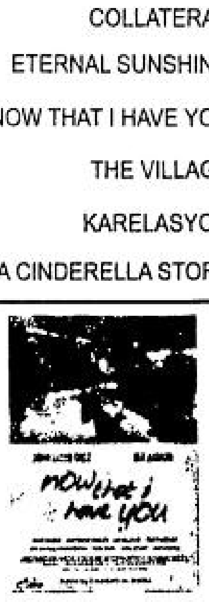
441-0458/59

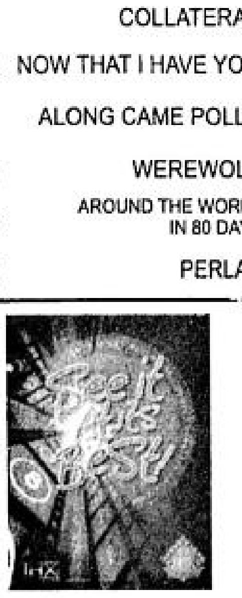
1	COLLATERAL
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	ALONG CAME POLLY
4	WEREWOLF
5	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
6	PERLAS

ILOILO

336-8070/78

1	COLLATERAL
2	THE PRINCE AND ME
3	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
4	EVE
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6	PERLAS


now that i have you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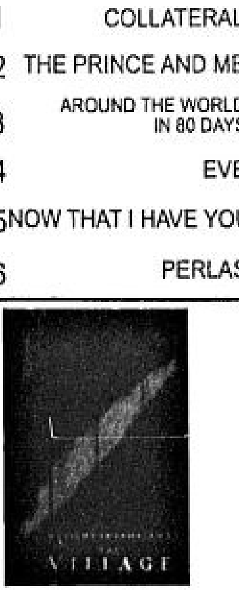
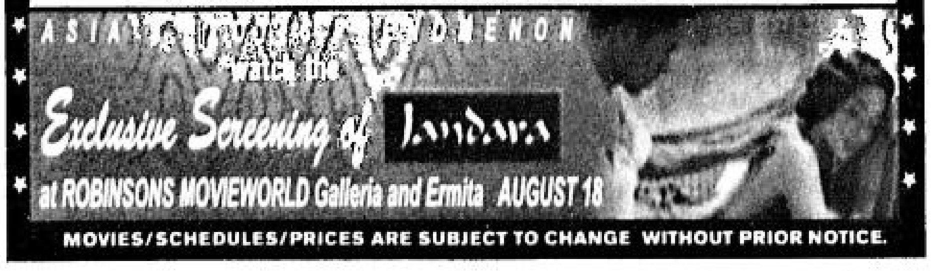
THX



at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD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at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD Galleria and Ermita AUGUST 18

MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Cinema	Sound	Movie	Schedule
3	Dolby	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	12:30pm 2:30 pm 4:30pm 6:30 pm 8:30 pm
4	SDDS	COLLATERAL	12:00 nn 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
5	dts	THE VILLAGE	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6	Dolby	KA-RELASYON	12:05 pm 2:15 pm 4:25 pm 6:35 pm 8:45 pm
7	Dolby	CINDERELLA STORY	12:25 pm 2:35 pm 4:45 pm 6:55 pm 9:05 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Date	Event
Aug 18	Bench Fashion Show
Aug 21	AVON Sales Convention
Aug 22	UAAP : Ateneo vs. La Salle
Aug 27	CUSA Opening Ceremonies
Aug 31	NCA 7 STAG DERBY
Sep 2	NCA 7 STAG DERBY
Sep 7	NCA 7 STAG DERBY

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KARELASYON
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	GARFIELD / COLLATERAL / THE VILLAGE / CINDERELLA
PREMIERE THEATRE	SYLVIA

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	KARELASYON
CINEMA-3	KING ARTHUR
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I, ROBOT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ELLA ENCHANTED
CINEMA-6	MAKAMUNDO
CINEMA-7	CATWOMAN
CINEMA-8	IMELDA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	COLLATERAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE VILLAGE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	CINDERELLA STORY
CINEMA-12	GARFIELD
CINEMA-14	DEAD PEOPLE
CINEMA-15	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-1	LADY KILLERS
CINEMA-2	I ROBOT
CINEMA-4	[illegible]

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
1	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50	GP-13
2	THE CINDERELLA STORY	11:05, 1:15, 3:25, 5:35, 7:45, 10:20	GP
3	GARFIELD	10:50, 12:55, 3:10, 5:15, 7:25, 10:00	GP
4	COLLATERAL	11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 10:00	R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

Movie	Rating	Schedule
GARFIELD	GP	12:30, 2:20, 4:10, 6:00, 7:50, 9:40
CINDERELLA STORY	GP	12.00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8.00, 10:00
NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	GP	12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00
COLLATERAL	R13	11:50, 2:25, 5:00, 7:35, 10:10
ETERNAL SUNSHINE	R13	1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
THE VILLAGE	PG13	12:40, 3:05, 5:30, 7:55, 10:20

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SHANG CINEPLEX

Cinema	Movie	Schedule
1	GARFIELD	FS 12 15 pm, 2 25 pm, 4 35 pm, 6:45 pm, LMF . 8 55 pm (GP)
2	COLLATERAL	(R-13)
3	THE VILLAGE	FS 12 45 pm, 3 20 pm, 5 55 pm, LMF 8 40 pm (PG - 13)
4	A CINDERELLA STORY	FS 12 15 pm, 2 30 pm, 4 45 pm, 7 00 pm LMF 9 15 pm (GP)
PREMIERE THEATRE	SYLVIA	FS : 12:15 pm, 2:25 pm, 4:35 pm, 6:45 pm, LMF ; 8:55 pm (R - 13)

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NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Movie	Schedule	Rating
CINEMA 1	CINDERELLA STORY	11:05, 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:20	GP
CINEMA 2	THE VILLAGE	11:00, 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8:00, 10:15	P13

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AUG 13 14 20-21 & 27-28	NYOYVOLANTE & NINA	9:00 PM

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[illegible] CHRISTY CHUNG SUWINIT PANJAMAWAT VIPAVEE CHAROENPURA SANTISUK PROMSIRI EAKARAT SARSUKH PATARAWARIN TIMKUL [illegible]

Released through Solar Entertainment Corporation

ANGELIKA takes a break

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

GUARDIAN ANGELS. She has a growing collection of angels, given by her fans.

WARM AND 'WEIRD.' She also has a collection of clothes she considers "weird," like this coat with a fur collar.

By Alexa H. Bacay

ANGELIKA de la Cruz wanted to experience living on her own in a condo, but her father would not hear of it. Instead, he built his daughter her own "condo"—inside their house in Malabon.

"*Nagpilosopo siya*," says the young actress. "He made me a condo unit inside our house."

OUT OF THE CLOSET

When this writer asks to see her bedroom, Angelika replies that we are already inside it. Her bedroom has its own living area and comfort room, with stairs leading to a second story where her closets and bed are found. It does look like another house within the house.

"My dad designed it," says Angelika. "I told him I wanted two floors with a bed on the upper floor and a sala. He said, 'I'll take care of it'."

Angelika says she had to turn down ABS-CBN's offer of a new soap because she wanted to rest from doing soap operas. After all, she has not stopped working in soap operas from "Mara Clara" to the recently concluded "Sana'y Wala ng Wakas."

"*Puro* soap, *puro iyak*," she says. "I need and want to rest. I also want time for myself."

"Sana'y Wala ng Wakas" ended with the wedding of Christian (Jericho Rosales) and Ara (Kristine Hermosa). Asked how she would have wanted it to end, Angelika says she would have had Ara choose Leo (Diether Ocampo) and Mary Ann (her character) continue her singing career without being attached to anybody.

Angelika says she sometimes gives suggestions on the characters she plays in soaps. For example, Mary Ann originally put on too much makeup and wore mini skirts. "I really argued," she recalls. "I said, 'No, I won't do that.' That wouldn't have been endearing to the audience, *'di ba?* I said, just let me be funny and cute."

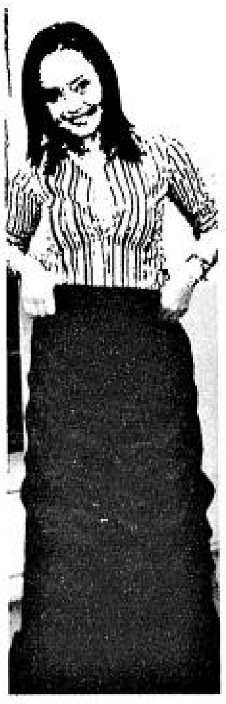
She says she could relate to Mary Ann because like her, the character was *makulit* and a hopeless romantic. But Mary Ann was a difficult role to portray, she adds.

Mary Ann, at first, was thought to be the character that would ruin the Christian-Ara love story in the series. Being in love with Jericho's character, it seemed inevitable that Christian would love the endearing singer back when he found out that his lady love Ara had died in a car crash with her mother. But it turned out that he was still hopelessly in love with Ara, and having discovered that she was still alive brought hope in the lad's heart, crushing Mary Ann's desire for love and bringing her to several emotional breakdowns in the series.

"Actually, she was the heaviest character in the series," she says. "If you saw my breakdown scenes, those were really heavy. It was hard to do. But it's something different from the usual things that I do on TV, so maybe it's really my favorite role."

Angelika has made a handful of endorsements, but she had to turn down others before she left GMA Network. She wanted to reenter ABS-CBN clean, she explains.

When told that people have noted that she has switched from one big network to the other and back again, Angelika retorts, "I don't care. They can say what they want to say, it doesn't matter. As long as I'm happy, I don't really care."



UNRUFFLED, she bought this skirt in Japan and added it to her "weird" stuff.

She said that her early switch to GMA Network was a career move because back then, ABS-CBN had other priorities. During the five years she worked at GMA, she was treated well, she says. Still, she moved back to ABS-CBN.

"After five years, I felt I wanted change in my life again," she explains. "Plus, my dad, who managed my whole career, is tired already. He said, 'I don't want to have anything to do with your show biz career anymore.' But he only wanted to entrust me to the ABS Talent Center."

Angelika hopes this move is for keeps, although she makes it clear that she was happy with GMA 7.

Angelika is now on "MTB" every Tuesday and Thursday, "EK Channel" every Saturday, and "ASAP" on Sundays.

These days, she also performs in shows out of town or out of the country. She said that with a soap series,'doing out of the country shows was hard because soap operas demanded a lot of your time.

She says she has a following in Japan, where she made an album in English a few years back called "In My Dream."

"I have many Japanese fans," she says, "because I look like a cartoon character *daw*.

"I actually have a website where you will see the fans. It's actually a magazine for Japanese and foreigners. But I forgot what site it was."

She can understand and speak a little Nihonggo, and might do an album in that language.

In fact, Angelika started in show business through the animé series "Sailor Moon." She auditioned to sing the series' Filipino theme song "Sana'y 'Di Na Magwakas," composed by Vehnee Saturno. "And because they said I looked like a cartoon character, they also got me as an image model," she says.

Angelika doesn't have specific favorites. She showed us the things she likes in totality.

"Weird" clothes. Angelika doesn't spend much on clothes since she gets a lot of them from her sponsors. She also has a penchant for "weird" clothing, which she buys in Japan.

"I'll show you my weird stuff," she says, producing a black, floor-length skirt with a belt. "I bought this in Japan and I've worn it once on a TV show."

She also shows us a coat with a fur collar, which she says she loves to wear whenever she's in Japan. She used it recently on "Maalaala Mo Kaya."

One of her favorites is a black, hooded sweat shirt which she wears in Japan with matching stockings, high-heeled boots and her furred coat.

She has a sexy black dress she has never worn yet. "I'm saving this for a date with a possible special someone who would come into my life," she says.

Whites and pinks. She shows a section of her closet that is filled with white polos. She loves wearing white, she says.

"I also love pink. You will always see me on TV wearing white and pink," she says as she showed a long pink skirt and posed for a picture.

Sleepwear. She wears her lilac silk spaghetti-strapped shirt and shorts when she likes to feel sexy in bed. Otherwise, she wears PJs like the comfy one she held for us with teddy bear prints.

Books. Like many other people in show business, she is reading 'A Purpose Driven Life.' "People might think I don't have time for my spiritual health, my spiritual life. But I do pray a lot. I don't go to Mass every Sunday, I go to the adoration chapel, where I feel closer to God. You just sit there and talk to Him, telling Him what you want, not listening to preachings but really communicating with Him."

Paintings. Angelika collects them. She has, among others, an Amorsolo, a Manansala and two Afables.

Toiletries. She loves products that pamper the skin, although she doesn't have a specific skin regimen. She recently tried a lotion given to her by Dr. Vicki Belo, and she says she likes it very much.

Angels. She also has a collection of angels, which occupy their own shelves. The angels were given by fans.

Shoes. Her shoes, she says, are in the basement. "You wouldn't want to be there," she says. "I don't think the place is clean." The pairs which she often uses are under her computer table.

Spirits. She shares a collection of spirits with her dad. Their mini bar consists of unopened bottles of Chivas Regal, Irish cream, scotch, sake which she buys from Japan, among others.

"I don't even know what's inside this," she tells INQUIRER Entertainment, pointing to a bottle she bought in Hong Kong. "I just bought it for the collection."

PRETTY IN PINK. Her preference for pink shows in this skirt.

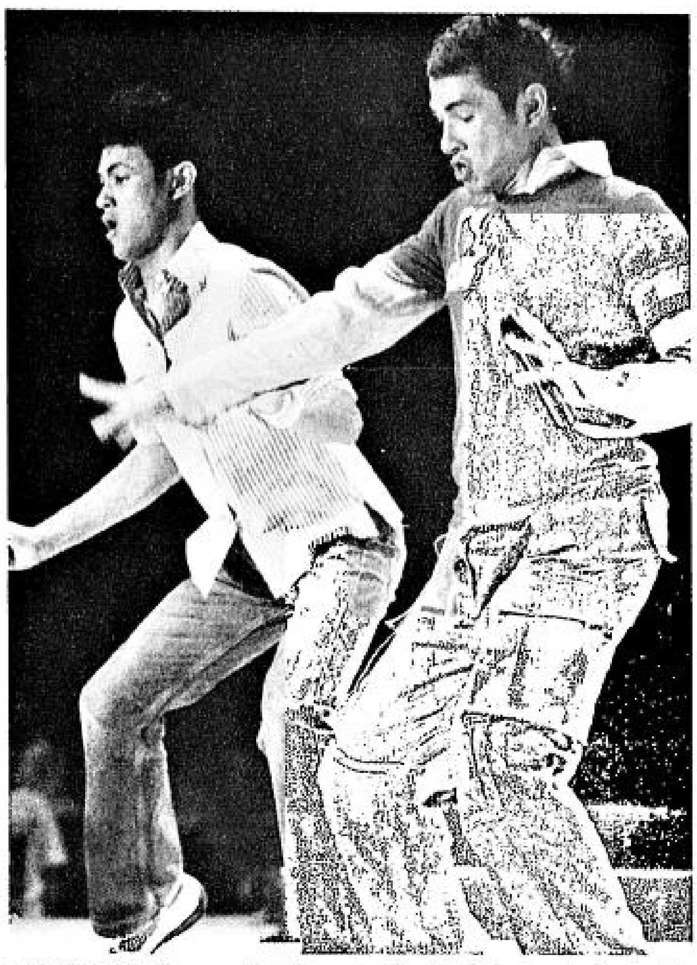
SILK FOR SEXY. She wears this when she likes to feel sexy in bed.

NOT SO LITTLE black dress is waiting to be worn on a special date

FIRST TIME. Eldest son Paolo performs with his dad for the first time.

"YOU'LL BE in My Heart," with Kiana

PHOTOS BY LOUIE AGUINALDO



LIKE FATHER, like son. Gabriel makes like his dad, down to the facial and body contortions.

Thank you for the music, Gary V

By Leah C. Salterio, *Contributor*

LIFE, it is said, begins at 40. By the time Gary Valenciano turned 40 last Aug. 6, however, he has already lived the equivalent of several lifetimes, and he wanted to express his thanks for all the blessings in his amazing life and career, and to give back to his friends and followers.

So on his 40th birthday, Gary V performed in a thanksgiving concert, "Thankful," at the Araneta Coliseum.

That day also marked his 20th wedding anniversary with Angeli Pangilinan, with whom he has three children—Paolo, Gabriel and Kiana. Their marriage, which has survived nasty show biz intrigues, has turned out to be one of the formidable creative partnerships in local entertainment. Angeli acts as Gary's manager, the wind beneath his wings.

At the Araneta show, when Gary sang "Sana Maulit Muli," the hit ballad which Angeli wrote, the audience was treated to photographs of the couple's wedding 20 years ago.

"Thankful" was a different show in that it was an inspirational concert. He is perhaps the only pop icon who has successfully made inspirational tunes part of mainstream music, and chart-topping music at that. Among his biggest hits are songs of praise like "Shout for Joy," "Sa Yahweh," "Could You Be Messiah" and "Take Me Out of the Dark." Midway into the Araneta show, Gary sang these in a medley that also included "I Will be Here," "Gaya ng Dati" and "Natutulog ba ang Diyos?"

In his spiels, Gary spoke from the heart. He didn't have to rely on a prompter to cue him. After 21 years in show biz, he knew exactly what to say to his friends and fans who have supported him for more than two decades now.

Throughout the entire show, Gary proved that he is a "total entertainer" as well as "Mr. Pure Energy." But he was apparently ready to relinquish the latter title—to his son Gabriel, another livewire.

Louder screams

When it comes to singing, Gary's eldest son, Paolo, is not about to be overshadowed. For the first time, Paolo shared the stage with his dad and they did a much-applauded number, "Open the Eyes of My Heart."

His two sons got louder screams than he did.

Gary performed one exhausting dance number after another with incredible energy. At 40, he showed that he can still give younger performers a run for their money. In the opening number, he danced with ABS-CBN youth group, Animé, but he ruled the stage.

With his only daughter, Kiana, he did a duet of Phil Collins' Oscar-winning song, "You'll Be in My Heart" (from Disney's "Tarzan").

There were a few numbers in "Thankful" that Gary's loyal followers have already seen in his previous performances. He did "Historia de un Amor" again, singing along with his beautiful Puerto Rican mom who was shown on the big screen.

For his dad, Vic Valenciano, who will soon

THANK YOU/ C4

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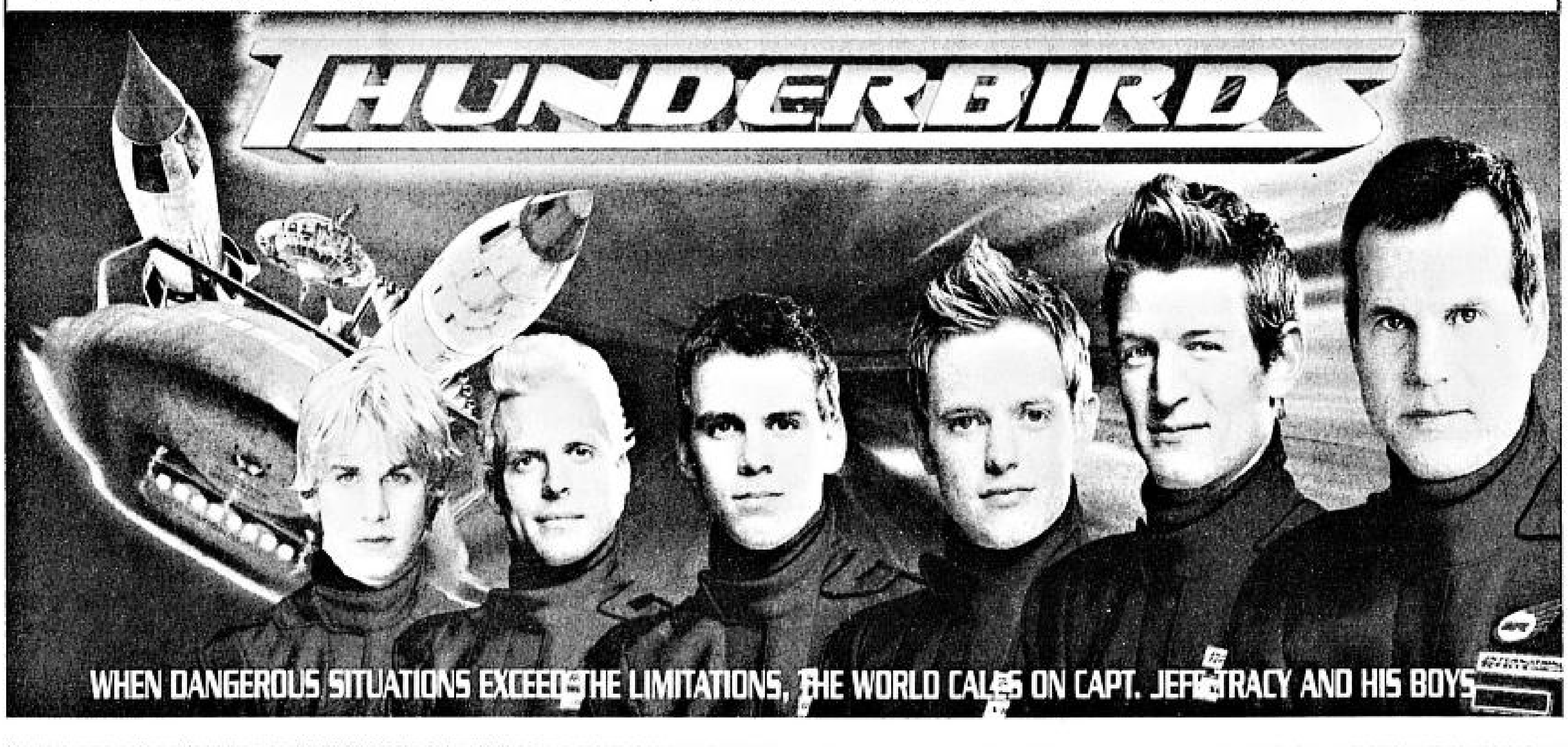
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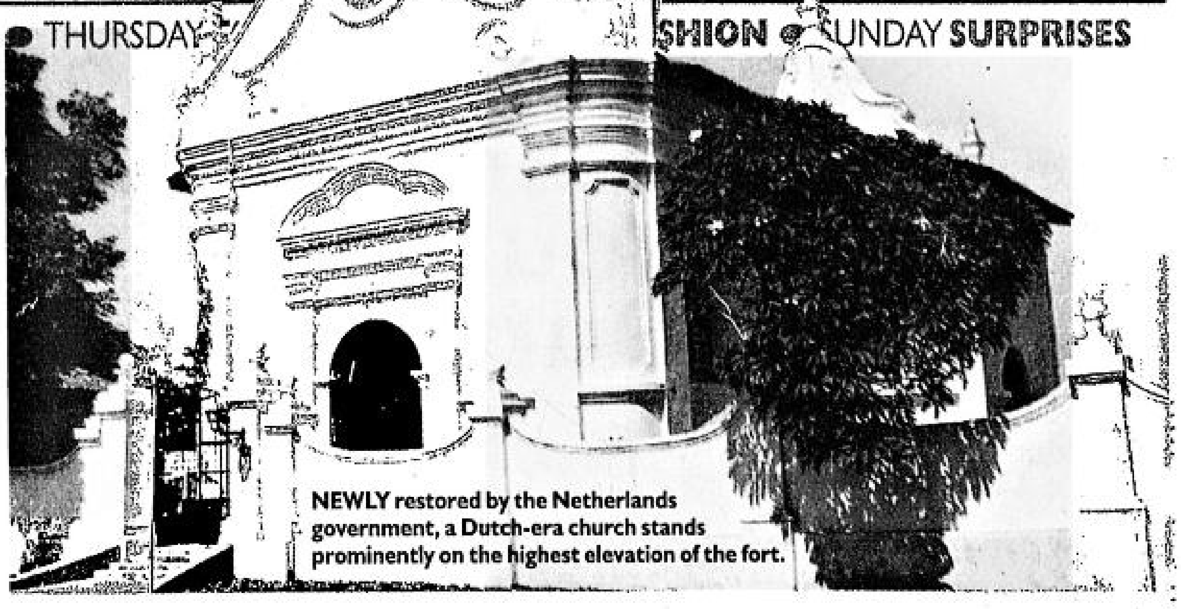
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Subsection Editor **Lito B. Zulueta**

MONDAY **ARTS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY … **SHION** ● **SUNDAY SURPRISES**

Sri Lanka's 'Intramuros' faces development threats

The 16th-century Galle Fort nurtures 21st-century life. But real estate developers are driving out locals and residents



NEWLY restored by the Netherlands government, a Dutch-era church stands prominently on the highest elevation of the fort.

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

HISTORICALLY, the island of Sri Lanka lay at the center of the maritime trade route between Arabia and China, strategically positioned off the Indian subcontinent along the access route of 16th-century European marine powers seeking the profits of colonialization and trade.

Trade is not new to Sri Lanka. Reported to be the island's earliest visitor, Ibn Batuta, the famous Arab navigator, touched Galle in 1344. In 1409, a visit by the Chinese admiral Cheng Ho was recorded.

Sri Lanka's famous commodities attracted many traders. By the 14th century, Galle had grown into the island's chief port of call.

It was not long before the Portuguese sailed into Galle for the first time in 1505. They later established the first fortification in Sri Lanka at Galle in 1588.

At that time the Portuguese were masters of the sea and only fortified against the enemy from the land. Therefore, the original Galle Fort was open to the sea and consisted of a wall and three bastions on the land side, with a shallow moat over which a drawbridge controlled the only entrance.

The Dutch captured the fort from the Portuguese in 1640, a time when the Indian Ocean was full of European nations competing for the riches of the east. They fortified Galle against sea raids from the British, French, Danish, Spanish and Portuguese. To guard their harbor at Galle against their enemies, Dutch authorities built stone defenses and bulwarks facing the sea, completely surrounding Galle Fort with fortification.

However, Dutch engineers did not solely concentrate on military functions. Paying attention to improving the quality of life among the fort residents, they introduced an ingenious, intricate sewerage system cleaned out by regular flushing with seawater lifted by a windmill.

In 1796, Galle Fort changed hands one more time. It fell to the British.

Within the 90-acre area circumscribed by the 14 bastions of Galle Fort remains the best-preserved fortified colonial town in South Asia.

Many of its government, religious and residential buildings belong to the colonial period. They were built by native craftsmen who adapted local technology to suit the taste of their colonial masters. A new architecture style that fused East and West evolved, ultimately developing into a purely Sri Lankan style.

In 1988, the Historic City of Galle and its Fortifications were inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List.

The Unesco citation reads: "Founded in the 16th century by the Portuguese, Galle reached the height of its development in the 18th century, before the arrival of the British. It is the best example of a fortified city built by Europeans in South and South-east Asia, showing the interaction between European architectural styles and South Asian traditions."

A walk through Galle Fort brings the inevitable comparison with our Intramuros in Manila.

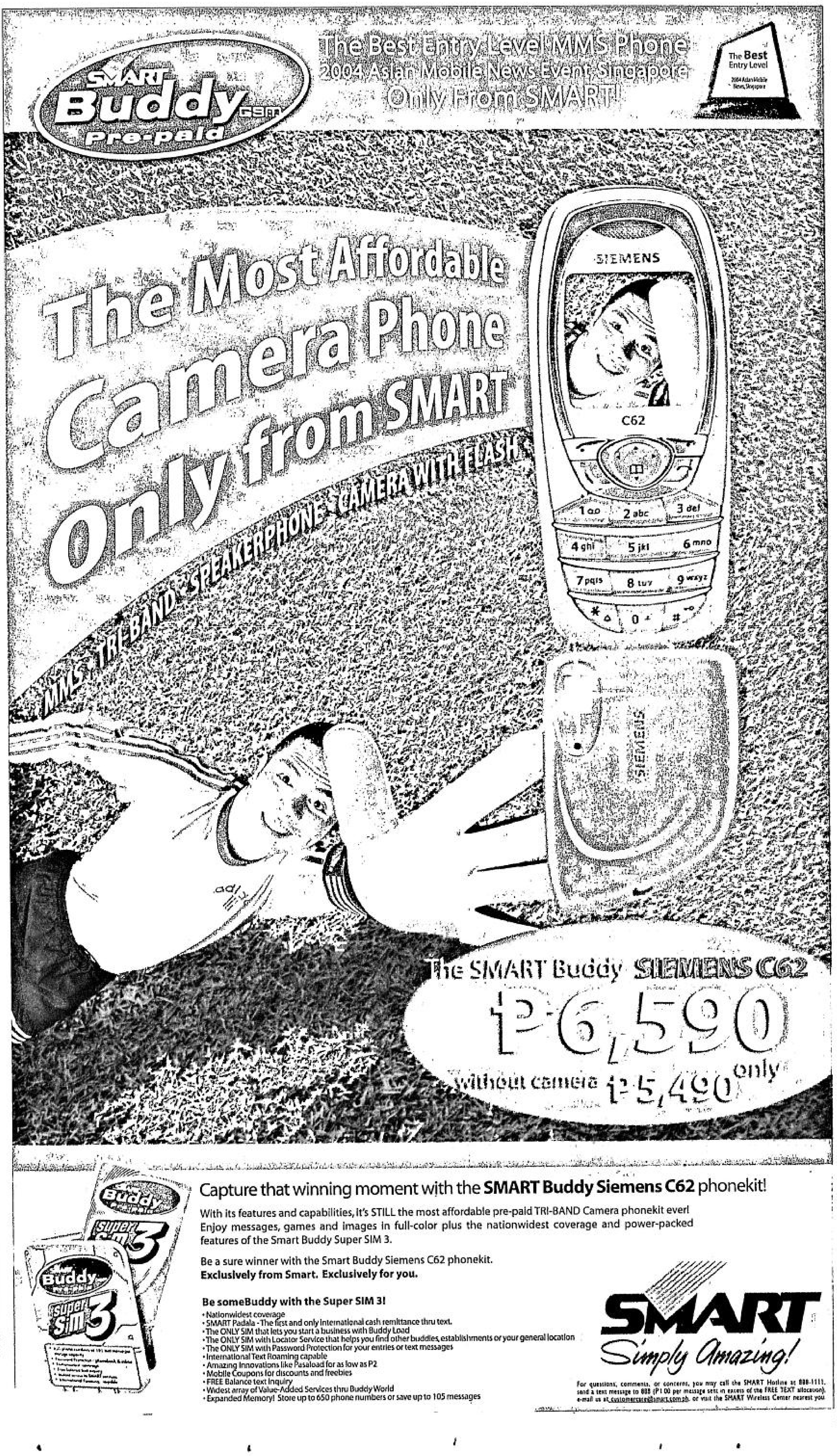
Both are 16th-century colonial seaside fortifications constructed within 10 years of each other by rival maritime powers Portugal and Spain.

They were established as colonial outposts whose walls protected administrative centers and a resident population. Obvious similarities include their location, size, scale and, in general, the street layout and local architecture.

The glaring dissimilarity between the two places is the presence of life. Galle Fort teems

SRI LANKA'S/ D4

CHILDREN take a break from playing on their streetfront verandah to invite us into their 200-year-old home on a narrow street in Galle Fort.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Serving Generations of Filipino Businessmen

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ANG TIAN SU SONS, Inc, a general merchandising company, currently managed by Joseph S. Ang, has been doing business with China Bank since 1920. The partnership has persisted for more than eight decades through several generations and the family remains to be the Banks oldest client.

In 1956, **WILLIAM CHIONGBIAN** initiated relationships with China Bank for their shipping business. In the company's early years, the bank provided support for its working capital and vessel acquisition requirements. Lately, the Bank has been financing their permanent working capital requisites, expansion and operations requirements under their mother firm, Fast Cargo Logistics Corp. and their new marketing arm, Fast Distributors Corp.

Business tycoon **JOHN GOKONGWEI, JR.** cited China Bank in a speech delivered during the launch of the Ateneo de Manila University John Gokongwei School of Management: "In 1957, I started a corn milling plant producing glucose and cornstarch... But there was one problem—I needed capital. That was not easy: I was 30, had no big company success to back me up, and I didn't know any bankers. Thankfully, Dr. Albino Sycip, then chairman of China Bank, and Dee K. Chiong, then president, gave me a clean loan of Php500,000 to start my business. Anyway, from there Universal Corn Products, the predecessor of Universal Robina Corporation, was born."

Many of these clients remained loyal to China Bank for several generations. In return the Bank continues to provide quality services, enabling them to meet their financial needs and exceeding their rising expectations.

Indeed, the history of China Bank is intrinsically woven into the fabric of the history of the Philippine economy and business.

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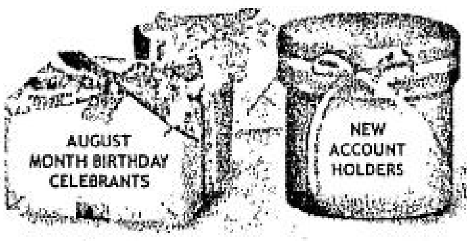
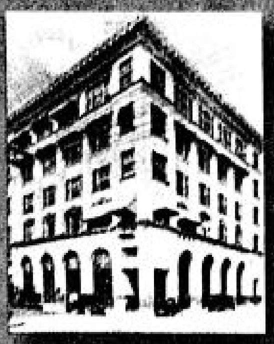


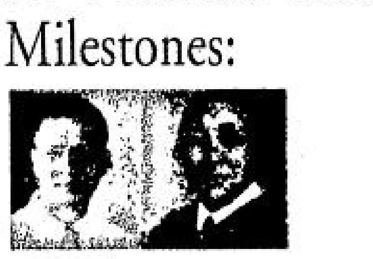


Since 1920, China Bank has been a continuing partner for more than eight decades in key business sectors, such as manufacturing, wholesale and retail trading, real estate, among others—creating jobs, generating wealth and lasting contributions to the economy.

Responsiveness to our clients' needs is a key source of client satisfaction. The Bank offers a wide range of products and services customized to respond to their needs. We put them in control of their finances by providing constant access to their funds thru a network of more than 140 branches and over 170 ATMs nationwide. China Bank provides a wide range of deposit and related services, international banking services, foreign currency deposit services, loans and credit facilities, trust and investment services, consumer lending programs and insurance products—all designed to help our clients succeed.

China Bank has proven its strength and stability, with top industry rankings in profitability, capital adequacy and balance sheet strength. China Bank is the 4th largest publicly listed bank in terms of market capitalization and 13th among all publicly listed companies. Because of these strengths, the credit rating agency *Capital Intelligence* recently upgraded China Bank's long-term foreign currency rating from B+ to BB-. The Consumers Union of the Philippines recognized the Bank's efforts to champion the interest of consumers by naming China Bank the Outstanding Commercial Bank of 2004.

Milestones:



1920
China Bank opened its doors on August 16 at No.20 Rosario St., in Binondo, Manila. It was the first privately owned commercial bank in the Philippines with business leader and philanthropist Mr. Dee C. Chuan as Chairman of the Board and bar topnotcher Don Albino Sycip as President.

1924
China Bank moved to a new office at the corner of Dasmariñas and Juan Luna Streets in Binondo.

1945
China Bank resumed operations after World War II on July 23, five months after the liberation of Manila. It played a key role in the post-war reconstruction and economic recovery.

1948
China Bank opens its first branch in Cebu city.

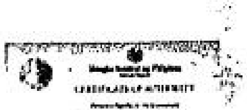
1969
China Bank computerized operations, becoming the first bank in Southeast Asia to process both savings and current accounts on-line. The bank opened its branch in Makati where the Head Office building now stands.

1988
China Bank upgrades its on-line system and with the launch of TellerCard and TellerPhone, the Bank introduced ATM and telephone banking services.

1990
China Bank joined seven other banks in setting up BancNet, the country's largest ATM network.

In order to strengthen its position among the major players industry, China Bank transferred its corporate headquarters to its present site along Paseo de Roxas in Makati City.

1991
China Bank acquired its universal bank license, making it possible to offer a more diverse selection of products and services.



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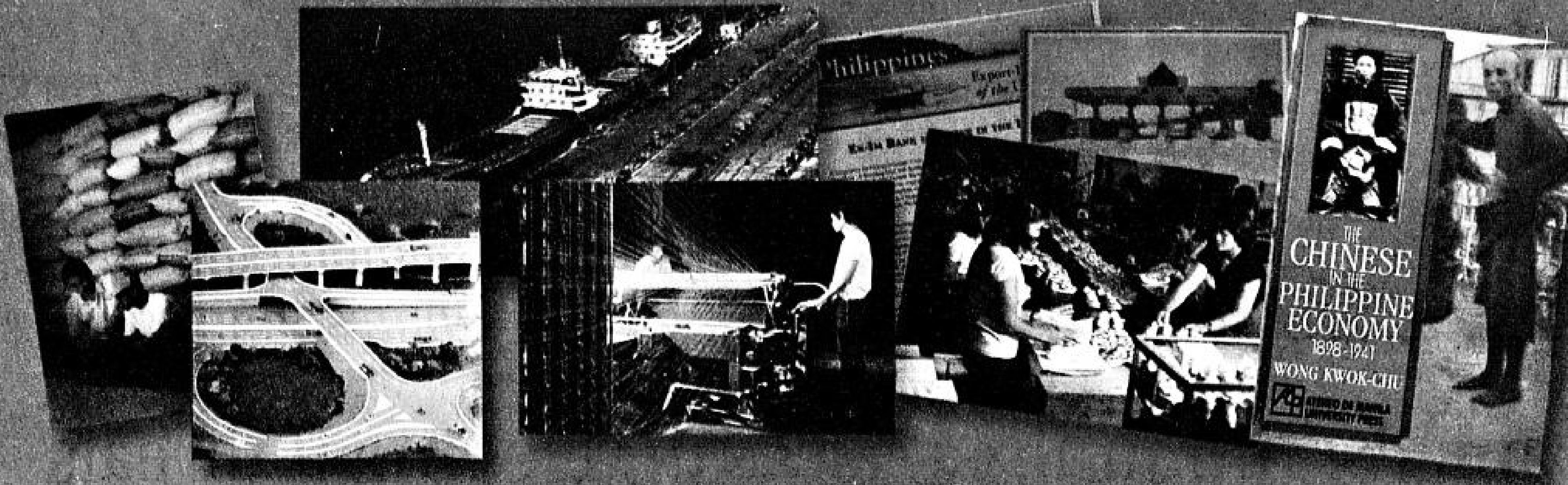
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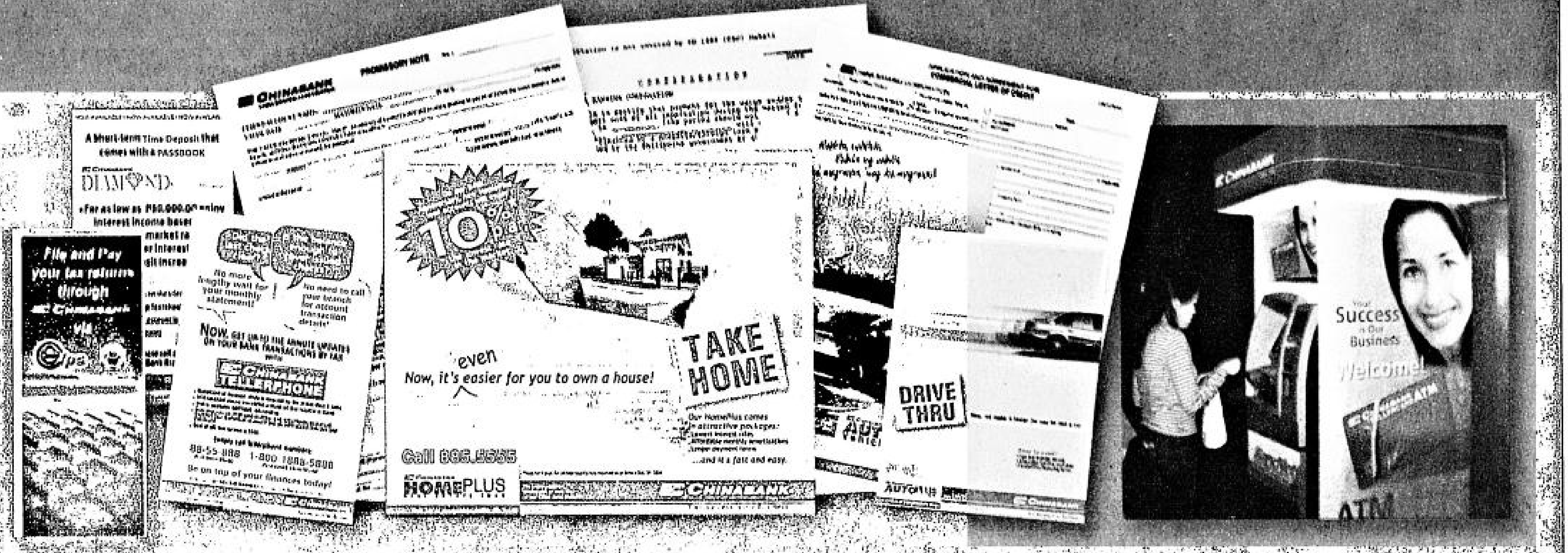
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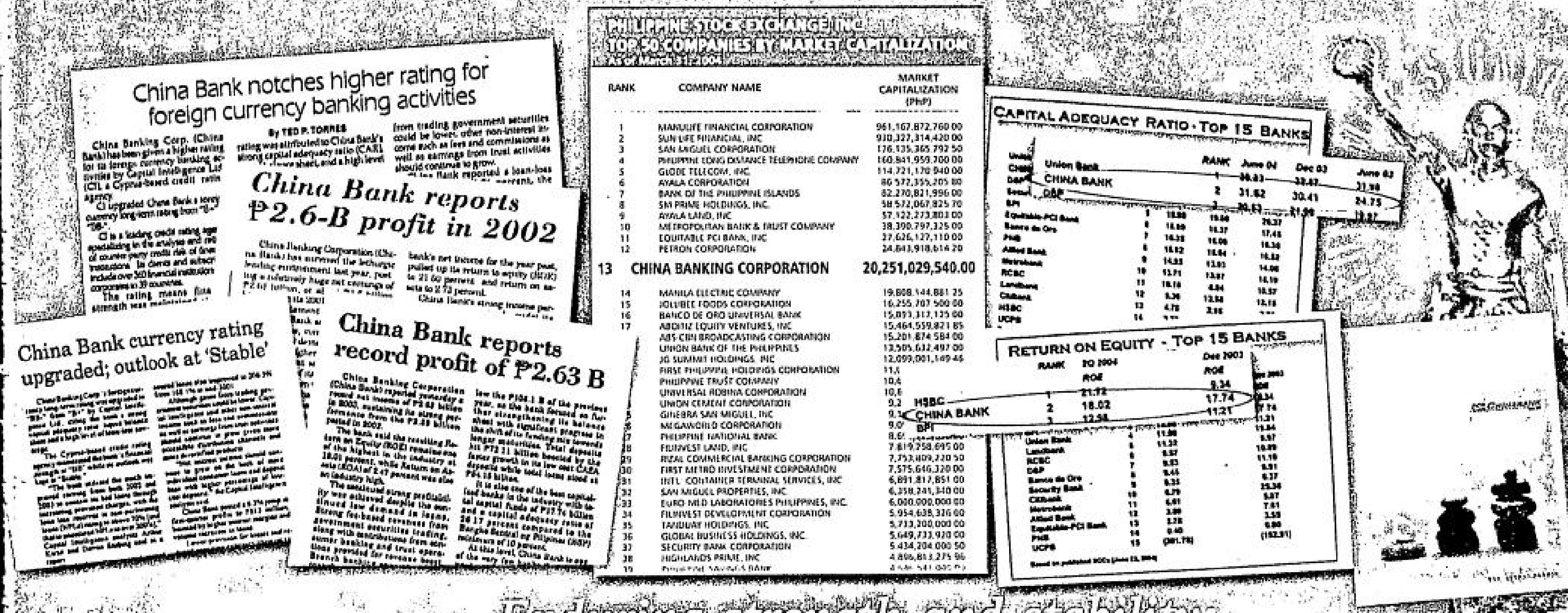

China Bank notches higher rating for foreign currency banking activities

By TED P. TORRES

China Bank reports ₱2.6-B profit in 2002

China Bank currency rating upgraded; outlook at 'Stable'

China Bank reports record profit of ₱2.63 B

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE, INC.
TOP 50 COMPANIES BY MARKET CAPITALIZATION
As of March 31, 2004

RANK	COMPANY NAME	MARKET CAPITALIZATION (PhP)
1	MANULIFE FINANCIAL CORPORATION	961,167,872,760.00
2	SUN LIFE FINANCIAL, INC	930,327,314,420.00
3	SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION	176,135,365,792.50
4	PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE COMPANY	160,841,950,700.00
5	GLOBE TELECOM, INC	114,721,170,940.00
6	AYALA CORPORATION	86,572,355,205.80
7	BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS	82,270,821,996.00
8	SM PRIME HOLDINGS, INC.	58,572,067,825.70
9	AYALA LAND, INC	57,122,273,803.00
10	METROPOLITAN BANK & TRUST COMPANY	38,390,797,325.00
11	EQUITABLE PCI BANK, INC	37,626,127,110.00
12	PETRON CORPORATION	24,843,918,614.20
13	**CHINA BANKING CORPORATION**	**20,251,029,540.00**
14	MANILA ELECTRIC COMPANY	19,808,144,881.25
15	JOLLIBEE FOODS CORPORATION	16,255,707,500.00
16	BANCO DE ORO UNIVERSAL BANK	15,893,317,125.00
17	ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES, INC	15,464,559,821.85
	ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORPORATION	15,201,874,584.00
	UNION BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES	13,505,632,497.00
	JG SUMMIT HOLDINGS, INC	12,099,001,149.46
	FIRST PHILIPPINE HOLDINGS CORPORATION	11.6
	PHILIPPINE TRUST COMPANY	10.4
	UNIVERSAL ROBINA CORPORATION	10.6
	UNION CEMENT CORPORATION	9.2
	GINEBRA SAN MIGUEL, INC	9.1
	MEGAWORLD CORPORATION	9.0
	PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK	8.6
28	FILINVEST LAND, INC	7,819,758,695.00
29	RIZAL COMMERCIAL BANKING CORPORATION	7,753,809,220.50
30	FIRST METRO INVESTMENT CORPORATION	7,575,646,320.00
31	INTL. CONTAINER TERMINAL SERVICES, INC	6,891,817,851.00
32	SAN MIGUEL PROPERTIES, INC.	6,358,241,340.00
33	EURO-MED LABORATORIES PHILIPPINES, INC.	6,000,000,000.00
34	FILINVEST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION	5,954,638,326.00
35	TANDUAY HOLDINGS, INC	5,733,200,000.00
36	GLOBAL BUSINESS HOLDINGS, INC.	5,649,733,920.00
37	SECURITY BANK CORPORATION	5,434,204,000.50
38	HIGHLANDS PRIME, INC	4,896,813,275.96
39	PHILIPPINE SAVINGS BANK	[illegible]

CAPITAL ADEQUACY RATIO - TOP 15 BANKS

	RANK	June 04	Dec 03	June 03
Union Bank	1	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
CHINA BANK	2	31.62	30.41	24.75
DBP	3	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

RETURN ON EQUITY - TOP 15 BANKS

	RANK	2Q 2004 ROE	Dec 2003 ROE
HSBC	1	21.72	9.34
CHINA BANK	2	18.02	17.74
BPI	3	12.56	11.21

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1996
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1997
China Bank issues US Dollar Floating Rate Certificate of Deposit, first time to access foreign capital markets.

1998
CBC Insurance Brokers starts operation.

1999
The treasury operations are automated using Flexcube System.

2000
China Bank celebrates 80th anniversary, donates Php 1 million to Tabang Mindanaw.

2002
China Bank hits the Php100 billion in total resources.

2004
China Bank launches cash management services for businesses and corporate clients.

The Consumers Union of the Philippines cites China Bank as 2004 Outstanding Commercial Bank.

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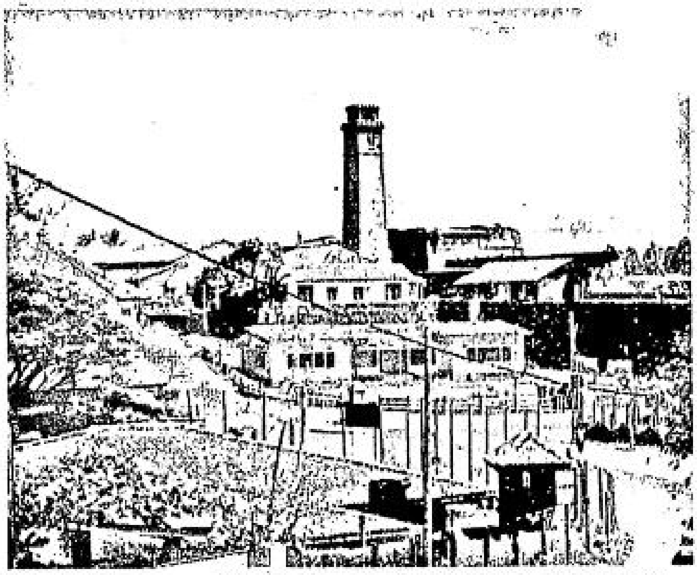
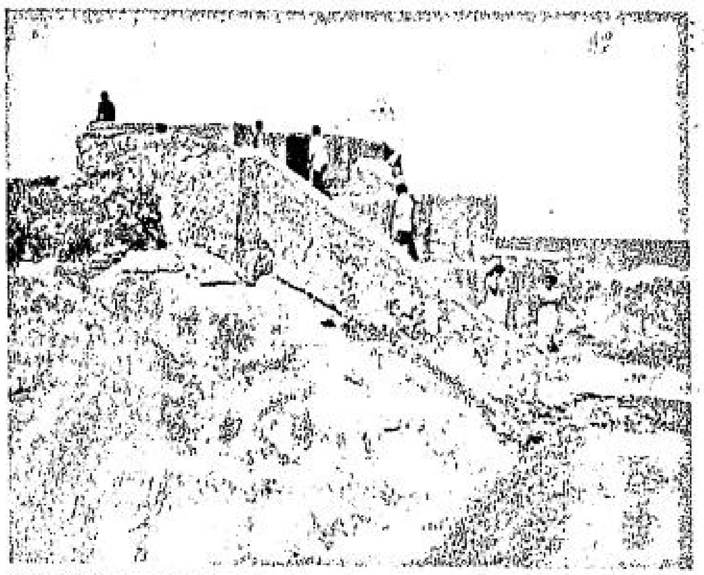
UNLIKE other heritage towns frozen into museums of the past, the streets inside Galle Fort still bustle with everyday human activity.



A CLOCK tower provides the key visual identity to the Portuguese-built ramparts facing Galle town.



THE DUTCH added fortifications along the seashore as protection against raids from the sea.

Sri Lanka's 'Intramuros' faces development threats

From page D1

with life. People continue to live there today.

On the other hand, residents have abandoned Intramuros. Now it is a ghost town. Authorities want to develop it as a mere tourist destination rather than restoring it as Manila's premier heritage quarter where the 21st century coexists with the 16th.

Galle Fort bustled with local life each time I walked through its narrow streets. Bureaucrats clutching fat portfolios went in and out of government offices looking officious and busy.

Residents went about their daily business; walking their children to neighborhood schools, shopping for provisions in the little shops within the walls, or stopping for a cold drink and a chat with friends in one of the many local places. Others went to worship at the temple or the church.

Not only are there low two-story houses lining the streets, which offer a glimpse into the cool interiors; there are also a number of small family-run shops that service daily life—small restaurants, food stores, bakeries, school-supply shops, and a supply of whatever else a resident may need to see him through a typical day.

The fort is a place set out with all of the amenities essential to the local resident. It is not reconfigured for tourist consumption.

There is a dimension of reality to the Galle Fort experience that made me realize I was part of the resident's daily life instead of being a paying ticket-holder at a contrived cultural theme park packaged only for tourists.

Tourists come in droves to the Galle coast. It is one of Sri Lanka's primary tourist zones. There are no tourism estates or "tourist belts" set aside for foreigners. Elegant resorts line the private waterfront but modest hotels open to public beaches. There is something for everyone.

Despite strict regulations to protect the heritage architecture, physical and social changes are happening at Galle Fort. Taken by its absolute charm and finding developing country real-estate prices very affordable, foreigners are buying many of the houses to use as holiday homes, leaving them empty most of the year.

Other heritage structures in the Fort have been converted into up-market bed-and-breakfasts, with the luxurious Aman Hotels chain opening what promises to be the ultimate facility set in a colonial building by the end of the year.

The foreign market raises real-estate prices to a level that locals can no longer afford; these force them out of the Fort, and change the quality of the local lifestyle. A resident who invited me into her house told me that since foreigners started buying out the homes inside the fort, many locals have moved out and the place is "not lively any more."

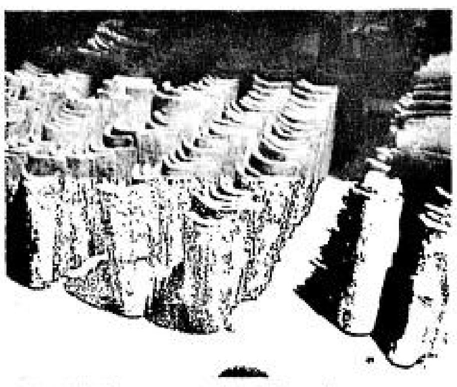
Is Galle being colonialized again? What direction the new lifestyle will eventually take is open to conjecture. But could it develop into the generic gentrified lifestyle seen in heritage districts all over the globe?

Gentrification happens when buildings in heritage (or even derelict) neighborhoods are given a new life and upgraded as residences, upmarket restaurants and boutiques. There is a formula applied to gentrifying neighborhoods, resulting in a generic feel to gentrified areas—The Rocks in Sydney, SoHo in New York City, the Bastille in Paris.

If gentrification is allowed to happen, then what is in store for the old Galle Fort?

The question to ask in the end is: Who are we preserving heritage for? I hope the answer is that we are doing it for ourselves and not for the foreigners or tourists.

E-mail the author at afvillalon@hotmail.com



ORIGINAL terra-cotta roofing tiles are carefully stored before their return to the roof of a heritage Galle house undergoing conservation process.

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Dancing their way to the Olympics

STORY ON PAGE E2

The Bayanihan National Dance Company is set to conquer the Athens Games' cultural olympiad on Aug. 23-25

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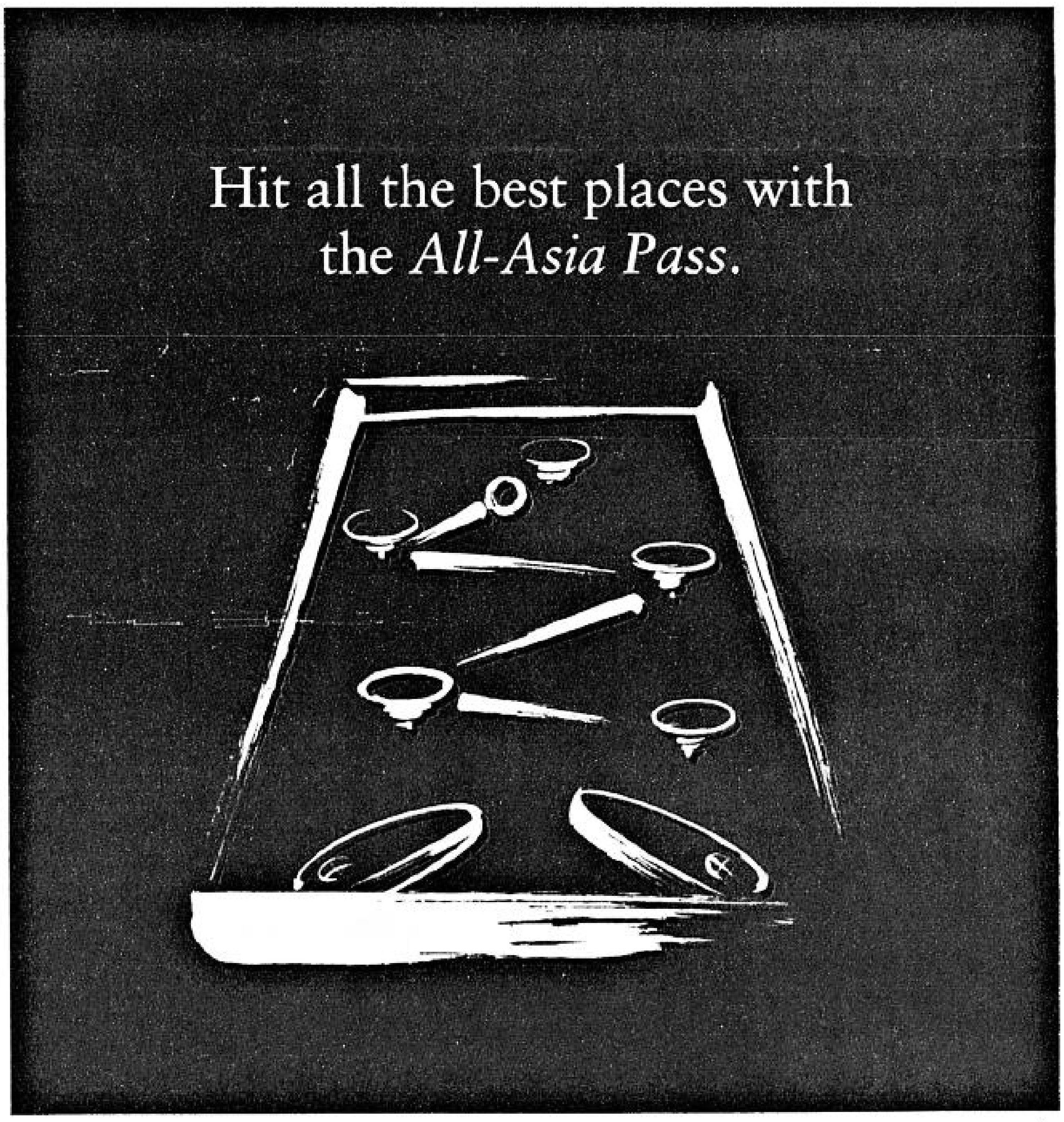

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City of true-blue music lovers

CECILE Licad in Callao Cave in Cagayan last year

By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

WHAT do Manuel Luna, violinist brother of Juan Luna who received a degree in music in the Madrid Conservatory in 1879; Irene M. Araneta (she sang Schumann's "Widmung" and conducted a Bach cantata with excellent results in the San Agustin Church in the late '80s); conductor Redentor Romero; sopranos Evelyn Mandac, Eleanor Calbes, Jovita Castro and Nina Zandueta; and tenors Noel Velasco and Lemuel de la Cruz have in common?

Well, they are true-blooded Ilocanos from Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Pangasinan, Isabela and Cagayan, not exactly in that order.

I thought of the Ilocano artists as I once again invaded Tuguegarao City in Cagayan last Aug. 9 to bring the music of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Schumann through young prize-winning pianist Oliver Salonga, who has now performed twice in St. Paul University's (SPU) Mother Madeleine Hall.

The concert was well-received. the nuns gave Salonga a standing ovation after the encore, Buencamino's "Larawan."

Helping make the outreach concert possible were new SPU president, Sister Remy Angela Junio, and Dr. Oscar Turingan, vice-president for external affairs.

The Mother Madeleine Hall has perfect acoustics. We tested it during the Romantic Concerto Journey of Ingrid Sala-Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes in 2001. The hall was not just piano-friendly but excellent as well for voice and flute as proven during the performances of Agustina de la Luna Deyro, pianist Najib Ismail and tenor Lemuel de la Cruz. It was also ideal for performing without microphone).

One reason for returning to the place is the very receptive audience. Tuguegarao City always gives guest performers standing ovations. They all loved the Tchaikovsky and Grieg concertos of Santamaria and Reyes, the Chopin Scherzo of Salonga, the Spanish songs of de la Cruz and the Traviata Concert-waltzer of Deyro.

With Cecile Licad, it was total euphoria and pandemonium and the pianist obliged with generous encores. A music-loving couple from Cebu, Mr. and Ms. Victorino Cusi (the wife, the former Pilar Pobre, was born in Tuguegarao), called Cagayan Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan after the concert and announced that I was being given a plaque of recognition for bringing Licad to Cagayan without any corporate sponsor.

I got the award from no less than Cebu Cardinal Ricardo Vidal and, upon knowing that I depend on the generosity of strangers to finance concerts, I was given a cash award the equivalent of a year's contributor's fees from the INQUIRER.

Not all my losing concerts are rewarded with cash awards (I got a plaque from the Isabela governor for bringing classical music to his province) and this is not the reason I keep going back to Cagayan.

The province is a place to explore after the concerts. It has numerous attractions like the Callao Caves and the nearby river complete with flying bats. It took 200 perilous steps to get to the cave. I thought of staging here a performance of the Schubert Arpeggione sonata for flute and maybe a portable piano.

MARILOU Diaz-Abaya with Licad (covered by author) in a *banca* ride through Callao Cave River in Cagayan

If, on the offchance I am able to make my fantasy a reality, Cagayanos will hear Schubert and Bach in Callao Cave in Cagayan.

Here and there

Cellist Victor Michael Coo is busy in the MasterWorks Festival in Indiana. He will join a European tour of his school orchestra. He just played a movement from a Dvorak cello concerto with the festival orchestra as one of the winners of a concerto competition. Among the young cellists, only Coo has the talent, artistry and sensibility worthy of a future Yo-Yo Ma.

Dancing their way to the Olympics

By Joyce C. Abaño

AT THE 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, not only the world's best athletes are showcased. Sharing the spotlight will be dancers from many nations, including the Philippines' Bayanihan National Dance Company.

The company has been invited to perform for the games' Cultural Olympiad called "Celebrating Cultures" on Aug. 23-25.

"It's the cultural phase of the Olympics, more like a cultural olympiad," says Bayanihan's executive director Suzie Moya-Benitez.

"We have trained our dancers and musicians constantly since they joined the company, and for them to be asked to perform during this big event to represent the Philippines is an honor," she adds.

In Athens, the company will perform an hour-long show every day for three days, with a repertoire that includes 15 to 20 songs and dances.

Bayanihan choreographer Ferdinand B. Jose, artistic and costume director Isabel A. Santos, music director Melito Vale Cruz and Benitez will be accompanying the 16 dancers and five musicians on this trip.

World-famous

Breathing new life to Philippine folklore and traditional rituals through dance and music has made the Bayanihan National Dance Company a world-famous cultural institution.

Like athletics, it takes rigorous training, constant discipline and years of hard work to excel in the art form the Bayanihan is now bringing to the Olympic games.

Before Athens, however, the company will be performing in Budapest on Aug. 12 to 22 in the Grand Folkloriada Folk Festival, one of the biggest folk festivals in the world, organized by the Conseil International des Organisations de Festivals de Folklore et d'Arts Traditionnels in Hungary.

"We have been rehearsing every day," says Jose. "In fact, for the month of July, we didn't even accept bookings. After we arrived from Monaco [last June], we started rehearsing for Greece right away."

The Monaco stint had the company performing in a fashion and dance show wearing the collections of Alfonso "Boy" Guino-o, Ben Farrales and Dita Sandico-Ong.

"Part of the dances and songs performed there [in Monaco] will also be performed in Athens," says Jose. "But of course we've prepared several new ones for this crowd."

"Our performers perform by rotation. We've trained our dancers to do diverse tasks. They sing, they dance, they play the instruments... it's always been part of their training," he adds.

Classic suites

Santos, who has been with the company since its founding in 1957, enumerates five classic dance suites included in the show: the Cordillera and Mt. Province dances, Spanish dances (also known as Fiesta Filipina), Muslim dances, tribal dances and the rural countryside suite.

BAGOBO

The Cordillera and Mt. Province dances are derived from the customs, rituals and lore of the pagan folk in the mountains of Northern Luzon. The accompaniment uses nose flutes, bamboo guitars, gongs of various sizes and shapes, drums and wooden sticks for instruments.

The Spanish dances depict the pervasive influence of four centuries of Spanish influence on the Filipino character, while the Muslim suite showcases the customs and culture of the Muslims in Mindanao, with touches of Arabian and Indo-Malayan influences.

The Rural Countryside suite is based on dances of people in the rice-growing countryside who express their joy in work and gratitude for a good harvest. The Tribal dances celebrate community rituals, victories, feasts and commemorations.

According to Jose, he has done innovative variations on several dances and combined a few choreographed pieces to fit a 10-minute portion of their hour-long presentation.

He has changed the choreography of singkil, for instance. "Before, choreographers based the dance partly on the storyline, but I've made my choreography tell the actual story through dance," explains Jose.

"Part of this will be performed in Athens for that 10-minute combo piece," he adds. "We have a dance combination, all Muslim pieces, which we call 'Voyage for Love and Peace,' which combines singkil, vinta, kasilimut and kuntao."

"Kuntao is a martial arts dance, like Tai Chi, but it's Muslim martial arts through and through. We asked the dancers to smile during the Muslim pieces *para hindi masungit ang dating.*"

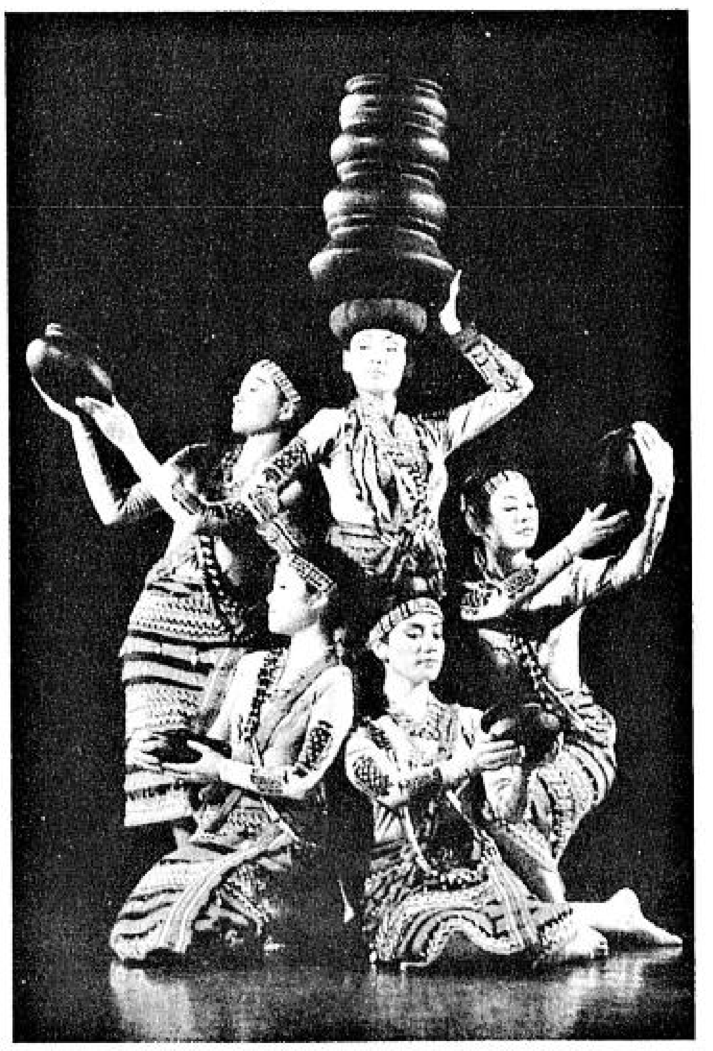
"I have also changed the choreography of [the dance] Sakuting," Jose continues. "It's a Chinese-influenced dance [meant] to drive away evil spirits. It's supposed to be a dance by a boy and girl, but now we've decided to put in an all-male cast to give more power to the dance."

Helping invest more power to the Bayanihan spectacle are the colorful costumes, props and instruments, which are as vital a part of the entourage as the dancers.

"We bring everything wherever we go, even the bamboo poles," says Cruz. "[Since] our dancers perform traditional, folkloric pieces, people usually look for these things."

If there were Olympic gold medals for commitment and pride in one's culture, the Bayanihan certainly would have won them by now.

SINGKIL



BANGA Salidsid

Ballet Philippines tours China

"TAONG Talangka"

BALLET Philippines (BP) will participate in the 6th Asian Arts Festival on Aug. 18-29 in Beijing and Chanchung, China.

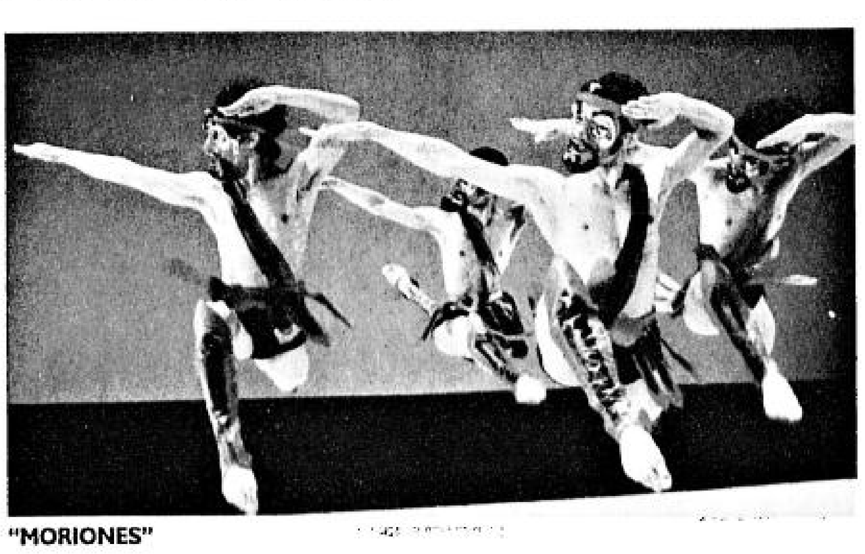
Ballet Philippines is the only dance company in Southeast Asia with an impressive repertoire of over 350 works accumulated over the past 35 years. It is currently celebrating its emerald season.

BP in China will show a highly charged repertoire of contemporary dances that have earned local and international praise for the company. The repertoire will include Agnes Locsin's "Igorot," "Taong Talangka" (awarded the silver in the Paris International Modern Dance Competition) and "Moriones" (which won the silver medal in Japan); and Alden Lugnasin's "Buhay."

BP executive director Ida Beltran-Lucila and sales and marketing director Monica Llamas will lead BP's 12-man team.

The Asian Arts Festival was first held in 1998 with the support of the China Ministry of Culture. For this year, some 30 arts groups from nearly 20 countries will participate. The theme is "Bring Glories to Asian Arts."

The BP tour of China is made possible by a grant from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the Cultural Center of the Philippines.



"MORIONES"

Rousing finale to romantic piano concertos duo

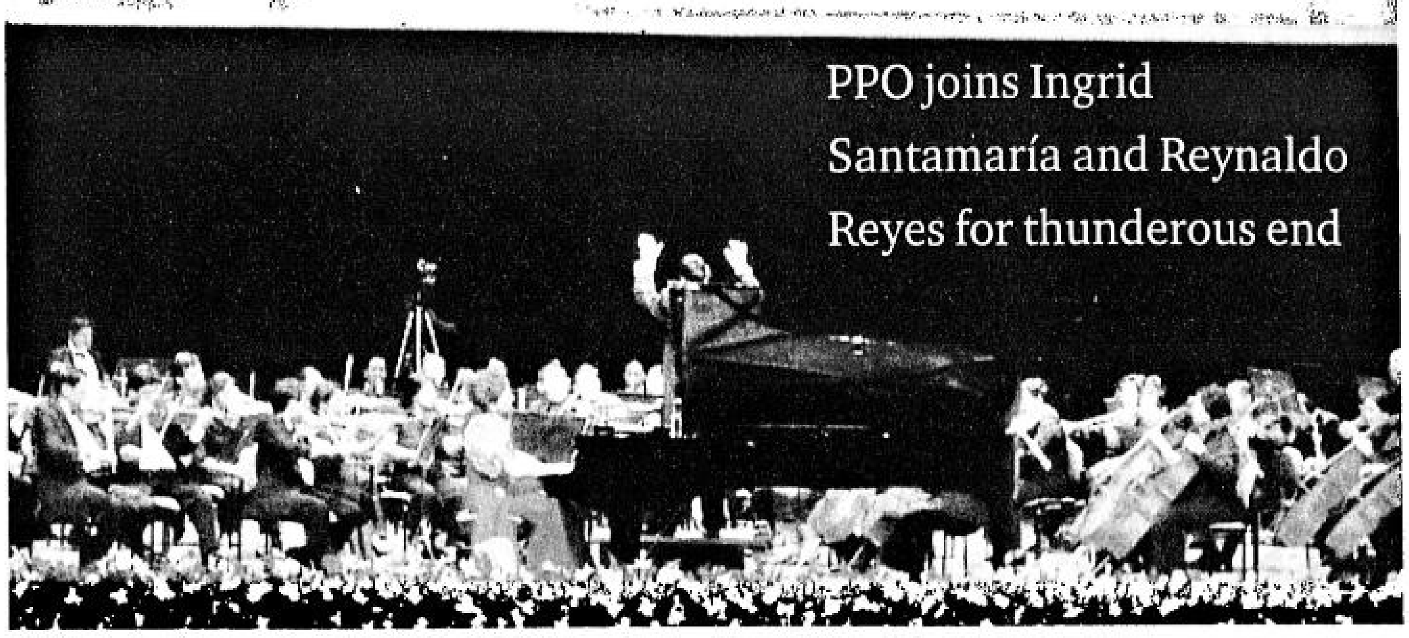
PPO joins Ingrid Santamaría and Reynaldo Reyes for thunderous end

By Antonio C. Hila

WHEN pianists Ingrid Sala Santamaría and Reynaldo Reyes embarked on a joint journey to perform romantic piano concertos more than a decade ago, they relied on only two pianos.

Santamaría was soloist and Reyes the "orchestra." Playing throughout the country and some parts of the globe, their repertoire consisted of best-loved concertos of the Romantic period that people knew and loved. This year's journey brought Santamaría and Reyes not only to key cities in the Philippines but also in Thailand, Korea and Vietnam.

Listening to them play requires a lot of imagination. For the flavor, the rich orchestration as well as dynamics cannot be fully savored with the score reduced to the second piano.



PIANO soloist Santamaría with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Maestro Eugene Castillo

Real orchestra

The seasoned listener has to rely a lot on imagination to appreciate the work totally. However, with a master like Reyes on the second piano, the sound of an orchestra can easily be approximated.

But ultimate pleasure is only achieved by listening to a concerto with a real orchestra. This was shown in the last performance of the 8th Romantic Piano Concerto Journey that saw Santamaría playing with the country's premier orchestra, the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by its current music director and principal conductor, the young Eugene F. Castillo.

Venue for the performance was the Teresa G. Yuchengco Auditorium of the Don Enrique T. Yuchengco Hall, a classy addition to the De la Salle University campus on Taft Avenue. Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco, chair of the Yuchengco Group of Companies that sponsored the concert, welcomed the guests.

The auditorium was full from the orchestra to the balcony, with students not only from DLSU but also other universities and colleges in Metro Manila, members of the diplomatic corps, teachers, professionals and music lovers.

Reyes, in his brief introductory remarks, correctly said romanticism, as a period in music, saw the breakdown of traditional forms to give way to a more subjective, emotional musical statement. This period in the 19th century saw musical expression in rich sonorities, the expansion of the orchestra, and the rise of virtuosity.

The concertos of Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky, Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18 and Concerto in B-flat minor, Op.2, respectively, are well cast in this mold. More than technical proficiency and finger dexterity, the concertos demand utmost sensitivity and warmth of feeling to bring out their freshness despite repeated performances.

AMBASSADOR Alfonso T. Yuchengco and Ingrid Santamaría

REYNALDO Reyes, PPO conductor Eugene Castillo and Ingrid Santamaría

Sublime performance

Happily, Santamaría refused to be typecast. She avoided playing tritely and performed sublimely.

Having heard her play these pieces for the nth time, I say that her approach was convincingly dynamic. Each time, she played the pieces with gusto and enthusiasm.

There was no complacency, but utter sincerity in her playing that brought much integrity to it. She was conscious that she was playing with an orchestra and was in close rapport with the conductor. Together, they brilliantly brought out the magnificence of the romantic spirit.

In the Rachmaninoff concerto, Santamaría and Castillo essayed a towering toast to the composer's ardent musicality that hovered throughout. Indisputably, this was at its height in the adagio sostenuto, the second movement that was the crowning glory of the entire work.

This theme was adapted for the popular song "All by Myself." The audience, dominated by the young, was in disbelief that such a classical piece could become a popular hit.

In this piece, the dialogue between the piano and the strings towards the end was poignantly carried out. There was no appeal to sentimentalism, only an honest-to-goodness expression of lyrical exuberance.

When the third movement was sounded, the older members of the audience recognized the familiar strains of "Full Moon and Empty Arms" that swept Hollywood some five decades ago.

In the Tchaikovsky work, Santamaría amply showed a Lisztian virtuosity, especially in the fiery parallel octaves in the first movement and the cadenza itself. Castillo, who showed much confidence, was as dependable as he was in the Rachmaninoff opus.

Together, pianist and conductor essayed lusty tones and arresting rhythms, with the climactic effects brilliantly sounded. There was no slackening of pace, especially in the third movement that spun off as allegro vivace. Mere finger dexterity does not give justice to the piece's rhythmic vitality and awesome grandeur.

The older members of the audience also recognized the first movement, incorporated in the 40s hit "Tonight We Love."

Antonin Dvorak's two Slavonic Dances appropriately opened the concert and prepared the audience for fine listening. Incidentally, the world marks the centenary of the death of the Czech composer this year.

There was much substance in the musicians' playing. The conductor gave meticulous attention to ensemble playing, to bring out inner voicing apart from melodic statements. With a young, dynamic conductor, people can have a more grand time listening to the PPO now.

For encore, Reyes joined Santamaría for four numbers from Brahms' "Hungarian Dances." Ambassador Yuchengco handed Santamaría a bouquet, and Bro. Gregory Wright, FSC, gave Castillo and Reyes each a lei of sampaguita at the end.

Thursday 8pm + Pagkatapos ng Probe + ABC

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Rina Jimenez - David

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WRITER-DIRECTOR Freddie Santos (center) with some of Trumpets Playshop's teachers and students last summer

Trumpets holds weekend workshops

TRUMPETS Playshop begins its all-new round of weekend workshops on Aug. 7 all the way to Nov. 27.

Now on its 11th year, Playshop provides a continuous learning experience with a year-round program designed to fit into the student's tight school or work schedule.

Students and working professionals can now make the most of their untapped talents as they learn how to build confidence, stage presence, as well as improve skills in voice, dance and the theater arts under the guidance of some of the country's best performing arts teachers.

Classes offered are Children's Theater (3-6 years old) and Children's Musical Theater (7-12 years old), both designed to encourage young performers to discover the fun and magic of the stage.

Older students can take Musical Theater for Teens and Adults (13 years old and above), which combines all the elements of acting, music and storytelling to help form a solid foundation for serious actors.

Streetdancing continues to be the dance of choice among young people. Classes are now open to enthusiasts 7 years old and above, with the Maneouvres on hand to show them the right moves. Trumpets' Musicademy, meanwhile, holds one-on-one voice lessons all week long (on a 12-session schedule basis) for intensive training in vocal and singing techniques.

Playshop also fires up its weekend program with an exciting new class on Public Speaking and Hosting for Professionals. Addressing the need for better presentation skills in corporate settings, it now offers a professional-level Public Speaking and Hosting course for office employees and company executives.

Facilitated by no less than topnotch events host, teacher, and multi-awarded writer-director Freddie Santos, this five-weekend communications course is designed to build confidence and develop skills in public speaking, within the context of corporate presentations and social events.

Call 6362842 or 6335010.

Star Idol

IT'S RAINING STARS THIS AUGUST!

Torrential rain of stars will hit Starmalls this month! And thousands of people are expected to leave their homes and troop to the nearest Starmall. Forecasters predict that it's going to be a "state of family fun and entertainment" that you wouldn't want to miss!

Starmall EDSA-SHAW

August 8
STAR CIRCLE QUEST FANS DAY
4pm

August 15
Denims Fair Fashion Show (for teens)*
4pm

August 22
On-the-Spot-Painting Contest
3rd Level, Foodstrip

August 27
Mega Job Fair Caravan Part III
10am, 2nd Level, Trade Hall

August 28
STAR BORNE MALL SHOW: MINI-CONCERT OF CENTER FOR POP TALENTS WITH SHERYN REGIS*
4pm

August 28
One-day Passporting
10am, 3rd Level, Function Hall

August 29
STAR IDOL 1ST SEMI-FINAL ROUND
4pm, 3rd Level, Foodstrip

August 31
HACAP-SCHWARZKOPF
"Look & Learn" Seminar
1-5pm, 2nd Level, Trade Hall

Wednesdays/Fridays
7-9pm-Acoustic Nights at the Bridge

Fridays
9:30pm – 11:30pm - Acoustic Nightlife

* Venue: Tradehall, 2nd level

METROPOLIS ALABANG Star

August 1
RAINIER CASTILLO FANS DAY*
4pm

August 6
STAR IDOL WEEKLY ELIMINATION ROUND*
4pm

August 14
STAR BORNE MALL SHOW: MINI-CONCERT OF CENTER FOR POP TALENTS WITH KING*
4pm

August 20
SEX BOMB: BOMB THREAT MALL TOUR*
5pm

August 29
BARNEY & FRIENDS FANS DAY*
10am

* Venue: Trade Hall, 4th Level

Starmall LAS PIÑAS

August 7
ChicoSci Mall Tour*
5pm

August 13
Aquarium Bar Tour
8pm, Venue: Mark's Sports Bar

August 14
STAR IDOL WILD CARD KNOCK-DOWN CHALLENGE*
4pm

August 21
STAR BORNE MALL SHOW: MINI-CONCERT OF CENTER FOR POP TALENTS WITH JOSH SANTANA*
4pm

August 22
Mongols Mall Tour*
5pm

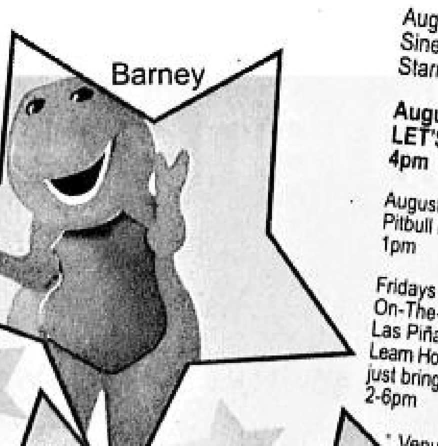
August 22-28
Sine Klasika
Starmall Cinema 2, 3rd Level

August 28
LET'S GROOVE WITH RETROSPECT
4pm

August 29
Pitbull Dog Competition*
1pm

Fridays
On-The-Spot Painting with the Las Piñas Painters Society.*
Learn How to Paint for FREE, just bring own materials
2-6pm

* Venue: 2nd Level



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Two Filipinos attend Vienna's ballet seminar

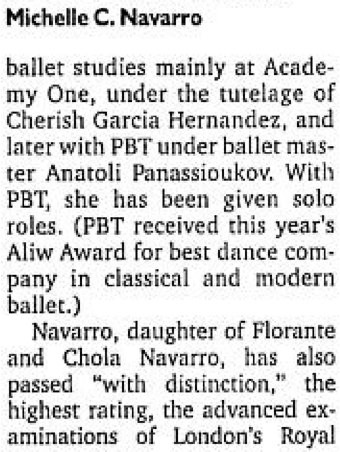
MICHELLE Maria Colayco Navarro, a member of the Philippine Ballet Theater (PBT), and Armel de Guzman, lead dancer of the Earthsavers' Dreams ensemble, received scholarships to this month's 30th International Ballet Seminar in Vienna, Austria, conducted by the Internationales Theaterinstitut der Unesco.

Navarro and de Guzman were endorsed by Cecille Guidote-Alvarez, presidential assistant on culture and founder/head of the Earthsavers' Dreams, winner of the Artists for Peace Award of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco).

The month-long seminar brings together renowned ballet teachers, professionals and students from all over the world in an intensive program for teaching and performance.

This is the second international scholarship for Navarro. She received a grant in 1977 at the Balanchine School of Dance Workshop in Aspen, Colorado, United States. She was one of three soloists for the celebrated Balanchine ballet, "Serenade."

A recent Management graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University, Navarro pursued her ballet studies mainly at Academy One, under the tutelage of Cherish Garcia Hernandez, and later with PBT under ballet master Anatoli Panassioukov. With PBT, she has been given solo roles. (PBT received this year's Aliw Award for best dance company in classical and modern ballet.)



PHILIPPINE Ballet Theatre's Michelle C. Navarro

Navarro, daughter of Florante and Chola Navarro, has also passed "with distinction," the highest rating, the advanced examinations of London's Royal Academy of Dance.

Davao's Kadayawan festival explodes this week

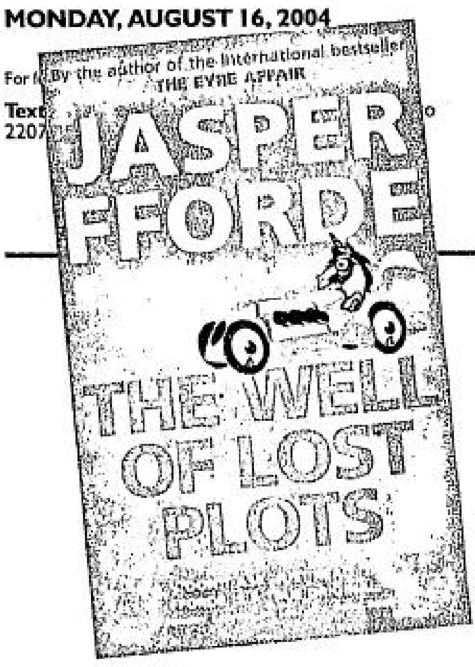
DAVAO will celebrate the Kadayawan sa Dabaw festival on Aug. 16-22. Theme is: Usbaw Labaw!" (Grow Beyond), a call on Davaoeños to go beyond and exceed the successes of their past.

Kadayawan comes from the word "*madayaw*," a warm and friendly greeting derived from "*dayaw*," meaning good, valuable or beautiful. Thus, the Kadayawan is a celebration of the beauty of life.

Among the activities are the Pasalamat on Aug. 16, the formal opening ritual where ecumenical prayers will be said; the Indigay sa Lumadnong Dula on Aug. 16 and 17, where indigenous and traditional community sports will be played; the Hiyas sa Kadayawan on Aug. 18, a beauty pageant that will also exhibit Mindanao products and industries; the Urog Etnika on Aug. 18, a showcase of Mindanao fashion and floral arts; the Davao River Festival on Aug. 19; the Agongan ug Kulintangan on Aug. 19, a musical competition using Mindanao instruments; the Bagobo Horsefight on Aug. 20; the Davao Indigenous People's Festival on Aug. 20, a tribute to tribal elders and intergenerational harmony; the Mindanao Indigenous Dance Festival on Aug. 20; the Indak-indak sa Kadalanan on Aug. 21, the street-dancing festival; and the Yanog ug Yugyugan sa Kadalanan on Aug. 21, the mass disco-dancing on the streets.

The festival will be capped by the floral float parade on Aug. 22 as a tribute to the abundant vegeration of the Davao region.

LIFESTYLE



All's well when reading 'Well'

"The Well of Lost Plots"
By Jasper Fforde
New English Library, London, 2003, 360 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

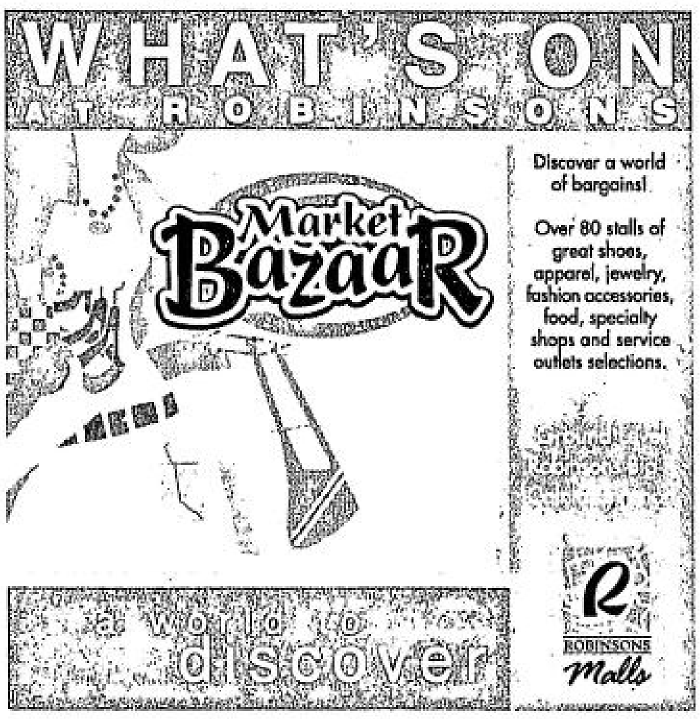
REVIEW

"BOOKS are magic," says one of the endearing characters in British writer Jasper Fforde's "The Well of Lost Plots." And if ever there is a writer out there today who embodies this statement in both style and substance, it is the intrepid Master Fforde. That's because "Well" is the third in his Thursday Next series, perhaps the most imaginative and enjoyable series of novels in the fiction market today.

From "The Eyre Affair" to "Lost in a Good Book," Fforde introduced us to a parallel London where Thursday Next is a daring literary detective connected with SpecOps, but soon she discovers herself in a totally other world, where people can literally jump into books and even mess around with the events contained therein.

At the end of "Lost," Next had the misfortune of having her husband Landen eradicated and was on the run from the cutthroat Goliath Corporation. The pregnant protagonist then decides to take refuge in the BookWorld and begin train-

ALL'S/ F2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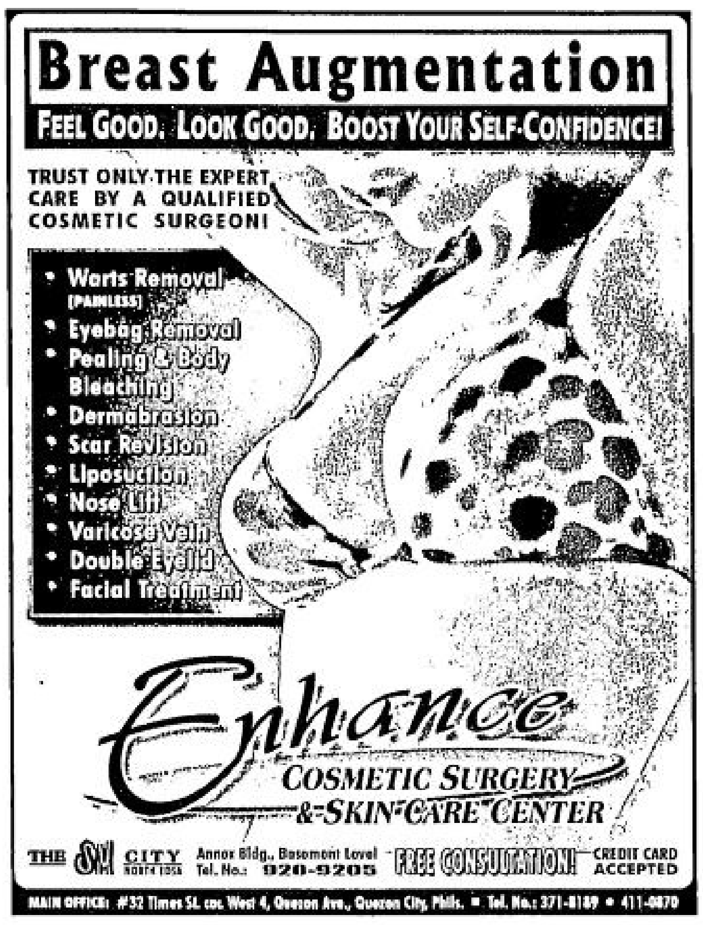
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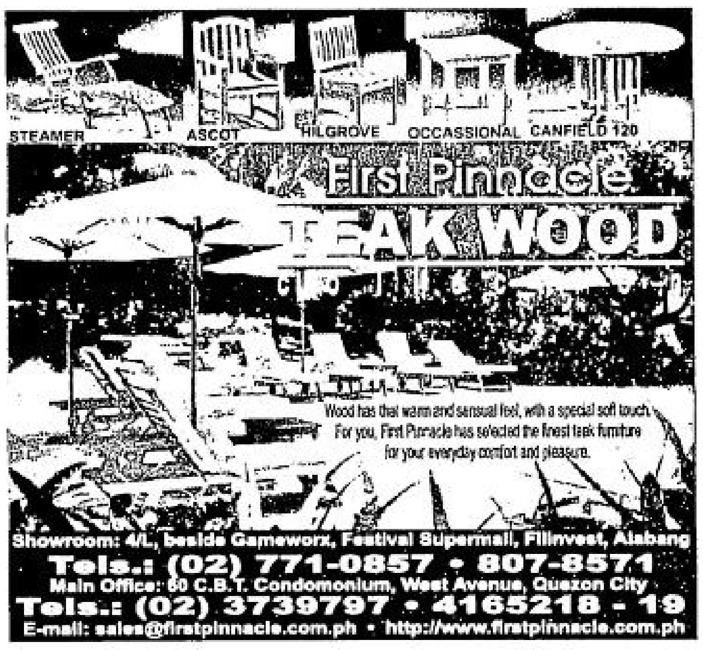
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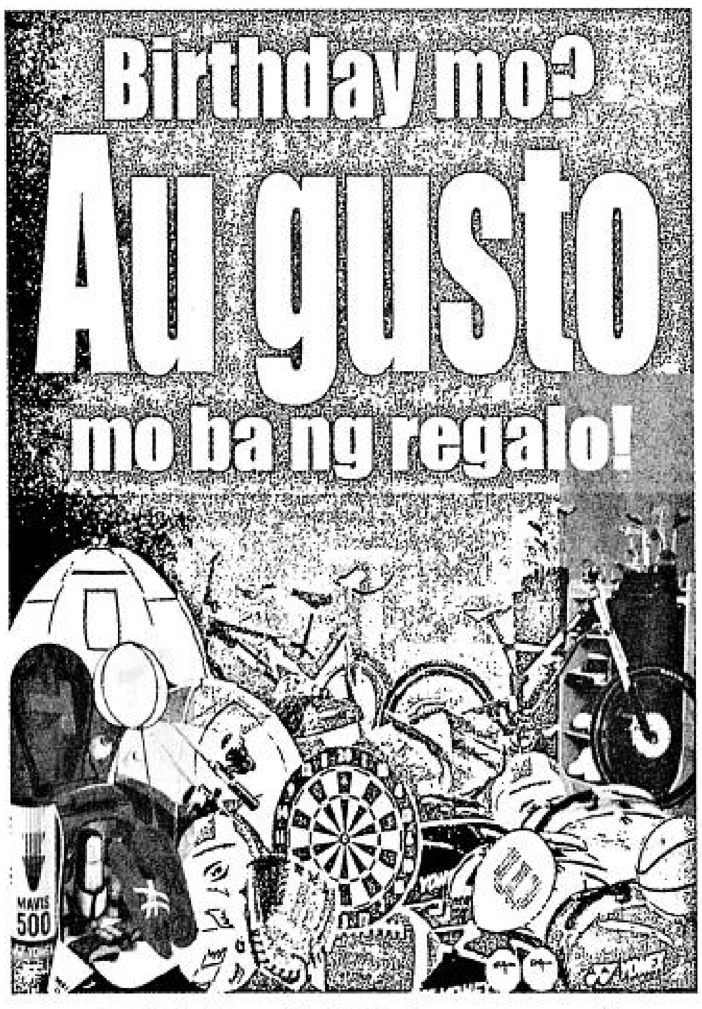
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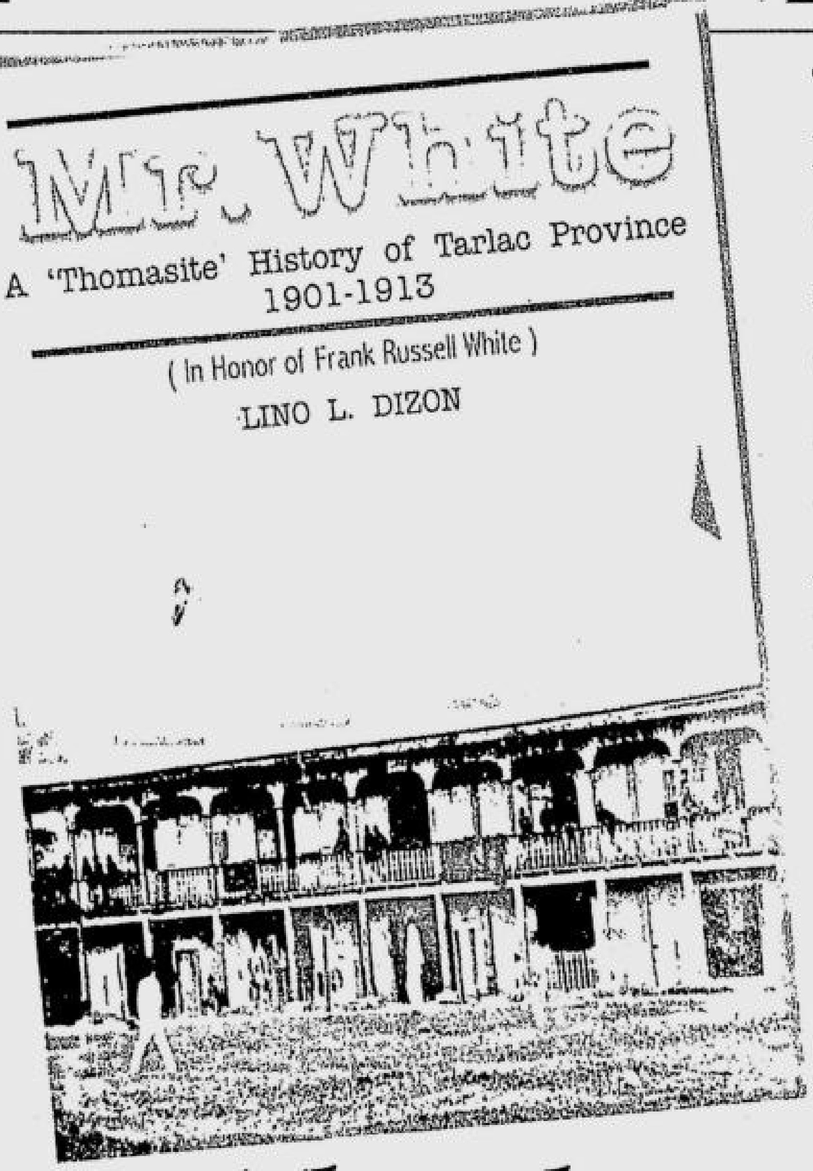

Mr. White
A 'Thomasite' History of Tarlac Province
1901-1913
(In Honor of Frank Russell White)
LINO L. DIZON

The book leads not only to the identity of a friendly ghost, but also to the American legacy of public education in the Philippines

The ghost of Mr. White

"Mr. White: A Thomasite History of Tarlac Province, 1901-1913"
By Lino Dizon
Center for Tarlaqueño Studies, 2003, 198 pages

By Jose Victor Z. Torres
Contributor

LINO Dizon's "Mr. White: A Thomasite History of Tarlac Province, 1901-1913" is the story of the author's search for historical ghosts.

For the ghost of Frank Russell White, an American teacher in the Philippines who rose to become the top education official in the land.

For the ghosts of the Thomasites, young and idealistic Americans who took their chances in living in a country thousands of miles away from home and teach the "American way" to colonial subjects.

For the ghosts of buildings, monuments, and ideals lost through time—the legacy of public education in Tarlac.

And, for the ghost of a history of education that still awaits a full blooming on the fertile soil of historical studies.

Dizon's search for Mr. White began with the tale of a ghost with the same name. This restless spirit was said to have haunted the public schools in Concepcion, Tarlac. It wasn't long before the tale became one of the many tales of the unknown in the province.

By following this ghost story, Dizon was led not only to the identity of Mr. White, but also to the story of an American from Illinois who created a legacy of public education in the Philippines.

Frank Russell White began his teaching career in the public schools of Tarlac. He built the Philippine's first public high school in that province. Then, from his next position as Tarlac's first division superintendent, he became the director of the Bureau of Education. It was through his efforts that vocational and industrial education played a large part in the public school system during the first quarter of the 20th century.

In the end, it was his indefatigable work that destroyed his health, leaving him dead from pulmonary tuberculosis at the age of 37.

But Dizon's book is not just a biography of White. The ghost story also led him to the story of a province on the throes of change under a new colonial master.

Like the other provinces in Luzon, Tarlac in the early 20th century was recovering from the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War. Occupying the province, the Americans found themselves dealing with the resilient Spanish colonial society. Religion still played a part in politics and the word of the priest against the Protestant teachers was still followed.

It was, at first, difficult for the *maestros y maestras Americanos*, but in the end, they overcame the Filipinos' obstinacy and made Tarlac a model of American colonial education.

Forgotten

"Mr. White" is also appreciated as a work dealing with the travails and triumphs of the forgotten stalwarts of Philippine public education—the Thomasites.

Of course, there were books published (or reprinted) during the centennial celebration of the Thomasites in 2001. But Dizon's book is unique for it is an interesting story of one Thomasite in the locality where he would live and die.

Thus, we have White's story colored with Tarlac's social, cultural and educational features. Dizon's mention of the Escuelang Laun, Escuelang Bayu and the maestro Americano make the reader realize that places like Tarlac had special names for buildings, people and places which, for bureaucrats, are just names in their official reports.

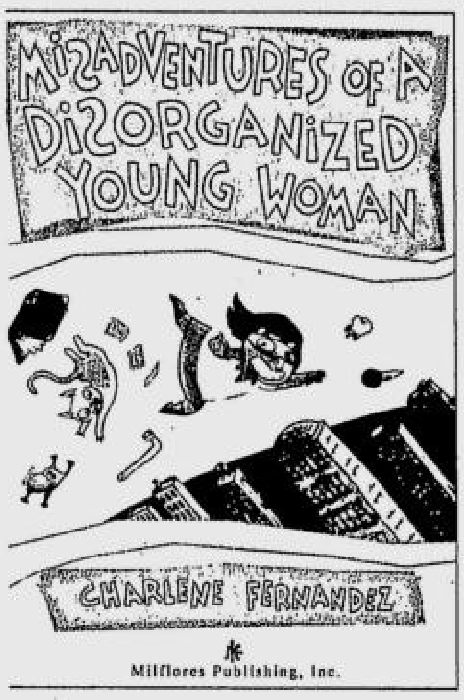
The book is an excellent contribution to Philippine local history. "Mr. White" is the story of Tarlac and its growth from a Central Luzon sugar bowl to a booming industrial asset of the American colonial economy with the help of colonial education.

The book is Dizon's eighth local history of Tarlac and Pampanga. It shows the growing interest of history scholars to the stories of the towns and provinces of the Philippines. This continuing trend has contributed a lot to the realization of the Filipino identity. Dizon expresses it best:

"Thus, for Mr. White appearing as a poltergeist in the garden house and the Home Economics Building of a public school in Concepcion, Tarlac should not be taken simply as an ordinary ghost story or easily dismissed as a folktale. It could be the augury of a more sensible, if not, soothsaying vision.

"In the face of the fact that present schools are losing their sacred and quixotic intentions, who knows, it could be a reminder of the path taken by a teacher from a bygone era that sought to provide answers on what he believed were the genuine forms and meanings of a fruitful education, even though it was merely in the footing of a dream. Unfortunately, then and now, it could still be a path not to be mostly taken."

Book of humor essays out


MISADVENTURES OF A DISORGANIZED YOUNG WOMAN
CHARLENE FERNANDEZ
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MILFLORES Publishing, Inc. has released "Misadventures of a Disorganized Young Woman" by Charlene Fernandez.

The short, funny essays in this book are all about the mishaps that befall an ill-starred, bumbling and accident-prone young woman, told in the style of Internet blogs.

Fernandez teaches English, Creative Writing and Literature at UP Diliman, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in Creative Writing and an MA in English Studies.

Robert Magnuson designed the humorous cover and illustrations of "Misadventures" in his comic-book style.

The book is available at all National Bookstores, PowerBooks, Books for Less and other leading book stores nationwide at P360 per copy.

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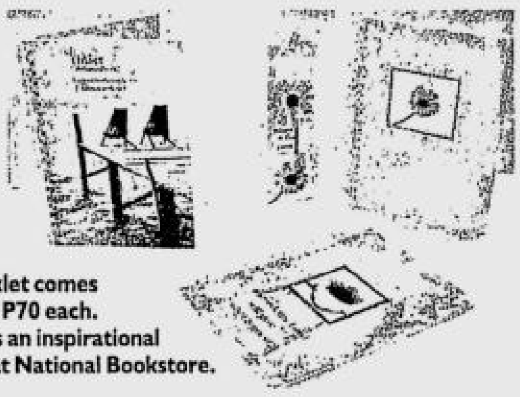
ERLINDA K. Ilusorio's book, "On the Edge of Heaven, Book 2" is now off the press. It picks up from where Ilusorio's first book left off—relating the author's experience upon her husband's (Potenciano Ilusorio's) death, focusing on the widow's disappointing encounter with our judicial system. Included are relevant documents and letters that provide mind-opening truths to her story. Call 8300243 or 67007662, or fax 8126729.



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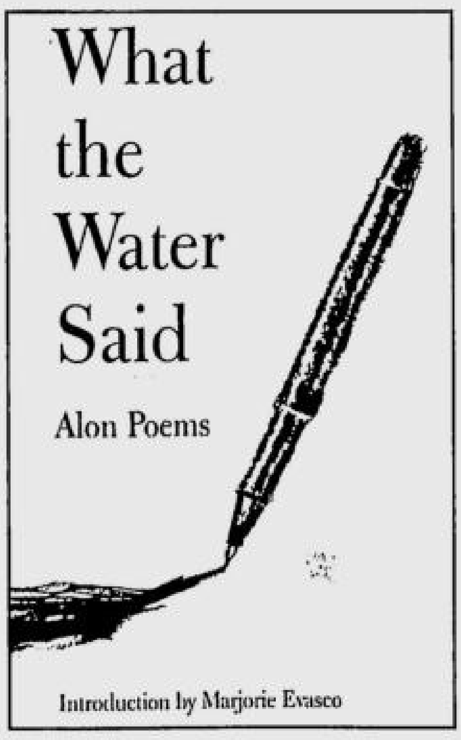
New poetry collection



THE UNIVERSITY of. San Agustin, Iloilo City, through its publishing arm, Libro Agustino, will launch a new poetry book, "What the Water Said: Alon Poems," on Sept. 2, 6 p.m., at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Bulwagang Pambansang Alagad ng Sining (4/L, CCP Main Building).

The book features poems by Ronald Baytan, Ernesto Carandang, Isidoro Cruz, Alice Sun-Cua, Vicente Garcia Groyon, Sid Gomez Hildawa, Shirley Lua and John Iremil Teodoro.

These writers, drawn together by a common love of words and language, meet regularly as the Alon Collective, each one bringing a new poem-in-progress every time for the other members to critique and discuss.

"What the Water Said" contains Alon poems completed between 1999 and 2002. "In many ways, the book is a testament of how a writing community is created and how each member brings a shared vision to fruition," writes poet Marjorie Evasco in the book's introduction.

Call 8323702 or 0918-9331304.

All's well when reading 'Well'

From page F1

ing as a member of Jurisfiction, the unit that polices what happens inside books.

It is from this point that "Well" begins, with Next, together with her similarly pregnant pet dodo Pickwick, settling into a new identity through the Character Exchange Program in a terrible detective novel called "Caversham Heights," which is in danger of being demolished. That particular book resides in the Well of Lost Plots, the place where all books come from, where ideas are refined, subplots are constructed and lines are polished. Living with fictional characters, Next, who is an Outlander—in other words, a real person—finds there are many differences involved when one resides in the Well.

And this is where one can begin to see the immense ingenuity of Fforde: "The relative absence of breakfast was the first and most notable difference to my daily timetable. Inside books, dinners are written about and therefore feature frequently, as do lunches and afternoon tea; probably because they offer more opportunities to further the story. Breakfast wasn't all that was missing. There was a peculiar lack of cinemas, wallpaper, toilets, colors, books, animals, underwear, smells, haircuts and, strangely enough, minor illnesses. If someone was ill in a book it was either terminal and dramatically unpleasant or a mild head cold—there wasn't much in between."

But there is much in between the cover and back page of "Well": Indeed, Next's quest to reconstitute her husband takes a back seat to her training as a Jurisfiction operative under the wing of the formidable Miss Havisham of "Great Expectations" fame. But there are new, dangerous developments in "Well." Even as a new operating system for all books is being introduced, someone is killing Jurisfiction agents, one of their own and Next may indeed be, well, next. Meanwhile, Next finds her memories under attack by a mindworm unleashed by Aornis Hades, the vengeful sister of a villain Next had dispatched. The worm was slowly eating through Next's memories, deleting everything, most especially Next's memories of her missing husband—unless they find some way of stopping it, of course.

But beyond the gunfights and narrow escapes (there are a ton in this book), there are the many marvels of the world of "Well." There is a multitude of elements Next has to deal with: life with two generics (featureless beings waiting for roles in books), a job working at the local franchise of King Solomon's Judgments, a picket organized by nursery rhyme characters demanding for vacation time, an anger management session with the residents of "Wuthering Heights" and constant interruptions by the Witches from "Macbeth." Seriously.

And humorously as well. If it were at all possible, Fforde actually packs more into "Well" then he did in the previous two novels. Aside from cameos by everyone from Count Dracula to Quasimodo, a grand awards show for book inhabitants as well as crossed footnoterphone conversations, "Well" features the most expansive and funniest exploration into Fforde's BookWorld, all of it in service to the irresistible plot built into this book. At great cost, Next unravels the conspiracy at Jurisfiction and must put her own life—and the fictional lives of the characters working with her—right. Though whimsical and constantly creative, Fforde doesn't go easy on Next: Our long-suffering protagonist loses friends and colleagues permanently this time and, by book's end, faces even greater challenges and responsibilities than ever before.

With "Well" as the best example so far, Fforde's Thursday Next series gives readers the single most delightful and ingenious take on the inner workings of writing since Salman Rushdie's "Haroun and the Sea of Stories." And the good news is there's even more coming: "Something Rotten," the fourth installment in Fforde's innovative progression, has just arrived in local shores, ready for readers to jump right in.

Before getting to that lamp-lit, bedside treat, readers and lovers of the word should experience the extraordinary joys of Jasper Fforde's "The Well of Lost Plots," a rousing novel that celebrates books and the power of imagination itself. It is a joy and a devotion best exemplified by the oath of BookWorld, one that is easily sworn to by anyone who has gotten lost in a good book and wished to stay there forever: "I shall uphold the rules of Jurisfiction, protect the BookWorld and defend every fictioneer, no matter how poorly written, against oppression. I shall not shirk from my duty, nor use my knowledge or position for personal gain. Secrets entrusted to me by the Council of Genres or Text Grand Central must remain secret within the service, and I will do all I can to maintain the power of storytelling within the minds and hearts of the readers."

Available at Fully Booked.

Book Award winners known

UST is Publisher of the Year

THE MANILA Critics Circle named the University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, one of the oldest presses in the world, the Publisher of the Year at the National Book Awards last Saturday at the 25th Manila International Bookfair at the World Trade Center in Pasay City.

The awarding ceremonies were co-sponsored by the National Book Development Board, the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and Primetrade Asia.

Two INQUIRER writers won awards. John Nery, executive producer for InqTV, won the award for Best Book of Journalism for "Unholy Nation: Stories of a Gambling Republic," published by Claretian Communications. Eric S. Caruncho, staff writer for the Sunday INQUIRER Magazine, won the Alfonso T. Ongpin Award for Best Art Book for "Designing Filipino: The Architecture of Francisco Mañosa," published by the Tukod Foundation.

The complete list of winners:

Anthology: "Consuming Passions: Philippine Collectibles," edited by Jaime C. Laya (Anvil Publishing Inc.), and "Sleepless in Manila: Funny Essays, etc., on Insomnia by Insomniacs," edited by Cristina Pantoja Hidalgo (Milflores Publishing)

Art/Alfonso T. Ongpin Award: "Designing Filipino: The Architecture of Francisco Mañosa, by Eric S. Caruncho (Tukod Foundation)

Biography/autobiography: "Rosario de Guzman-Lingat, 1924-1997: The Burden of Self and History," by Soledad S. Reyes (Ateneo de Manila University Press)

Comic books: "Mars Ravelo's Darna," edited by Zach Yonzon (Mango Comics), and "Siglo: Freedom," edited by Dean Francis Alfar and Vincent Simbulan (Mango Books, Quest Ventures, and Kestrel IMC)

Cookbooks and food: "Comfort Food," edited by Erlinda Enriquez Panlilio (Anvil)

Drama: "Sa Sariling Bayan: Apat na Dulang May Musika," by Bienvenido Lumbera (De La Salle University Press)

Essay: "Porn Again: Midlife Outtakes and Mistakes," by Jose Javier Reyes (Anvil)

Fiction: "Daisy Nueve: Stories Weird, Wonderful, Whatever," by Menchu Aquino Sarmiento. (Anvil), "Feast and Famine: Stories of Negros," by Rosario Cruz Lucero (University of the Philippines Press), "Mayong," by Abdon M. Balde Jr. (UST Publishing House) and "The Sky Over Dimas," by Vicente Garcia Groyon (DLSU Press)

Film criticism: "Cine: Spanish Influences on Early Cinema in the Philippines," by Nick Deocampo (National Commission for Culture and the Arts)

History: "Occupation '42," by Benito J. Legarda Jr. (DLSU Press)

Journalism: "Unholy Nation: Stories of a Gambling Republic," edited by John Nery (Claretian Communications)

Law: "Judgment Proof: How to Protect Your Property and Business from Lawsuits, Philippine Asset Protection Law," by Jim V. Lopez (Anvil)

Literary criticism: "Talinghaga ng Gana: Ang Banal sa mga Piling Tulang Tagalog ng Ika-20 Siglo," by Rebecca T. Añonuevo (UST Publishing House), and "Theater for the Nation: A Prospectus for the National Theater of the Philippines," by Cecile Guidote-Alvarez (DLSU Press)

Literary history: "Filipino Women Writers in English: Their Story, 1905-2002," by Edna Zapanta-Manlapaz (ADMU Press)

Personal anthology: "Checkmate: The Cesar Ruiz Aquino Reader," by Cesar Ruiz Aquino (Midtown Publishing)

Poetry: "The Nymph of MTV," by Angelo V. Suarez (UST Publishing House), and "Onyx," by Romulo P. Baquiran Jr. (UP Press)

Sciences: "Fishes of the Philippines: A Guide to Identification of Families," by Genevieve Broad (Anvil)

Screenplay: "Tatlong Dulang Pampelikula," by Pedro C. Laurel Jr., Ramon Felipe A. Sarmiento and Rodolfo C. Vera (UP Press)

Translation: "Ang Etika ni Santo Tomas de Aquino," translated by Tomas G. Rosario Jr. (UST Publishing House), and "Gloria: Roman Leoncio's Kapampangan Translation of Huseng Batute's Verse Novel Lost and Found," edited by Virgilio A. Reyes Jr. (Holy Angel University Press)

Young adult literature: "Almost Married: A Novel about Love, Longing, and Last Hurrahs," by Tara FT Sering (Summit Books).

Best design: "Consuming Passions," edited by Jaime C. Laya (Anvil)

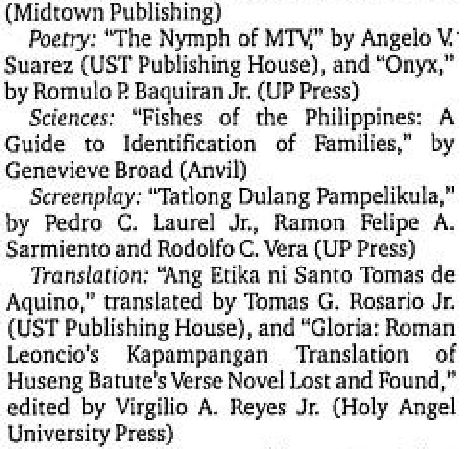
Publisher of the year: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House

The MCC is a non-stock, non-profit organization of professional literary critics and newspaper columnists that has been recognizing the country's best books with the National Book Award since 1981. The MCC's members are National Artist Virgilio S. Almario (UP), Juaniyo Arcellana (Philippine Star), Cirilo F. Bautista (Manila Bulletin and DLSU), Miguel A. Bernad, S.J. (Philippine Star and Xavier University), Isagani R. Cruz (Philippine Star and DLSU), Ruel S. De Vera (Philippine Daily Inquirer and Ateneo), Ophelia Alcantara Dimalanta (UST), Resil B. Mojares (University of San Carlos), Danton Remoto (Philippine Star and Ateneo), and Alfred A. Yuson (Philippine Star and Ateneo).

ERLINDA Enriquez Panlilio. Her "Comfort Food" is best food book.

JAIME C. Laya. His "Consuming Passions" is best anthology and best book design.

REBECCA T. Añonuevo. Her "Talinghaga ng Gana" is best literary criticism.



ERIC S. Caruncho. His book on architect Francisco Mañosa is best art book.

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EDUCATION REVOLUTION

Tutors know they have to teach by example

By Kate Villaruz
Contributor

PURSUING teaching as a profession is a difficult decision to make. Between a lucrative corporate job and being a teacher with meager earnings, the scales of reason would naturally tip in favor of the former.

I had a nagging feeling that whatever it was I decided to do, it couldn't be just for the money. So I took a leap of faith and gave teaching a shot. It was one of the best decisions I made in my life.

It is in teaching that I am able to share myself fully without feeling empty. I guess it's like good karma. The more you give, the more you get back in return—even a hundredfold.

However, I have never felt as blessed and affirmed as a teacher as when I became actively involved in the Foundation for Worldwide People Power's Education Revolution Mentoring the Mentors program.

In April and May, I was part of a team that brought the Mentoring the Mentors program to the cities of Davao, Sagay and Cagayan de Oro. I was asked to talk on Character Formation as part of the program's efforts to bring back the nurturing dimension of teaching in public schools and teacher education institutions.

The whole experience gave me a deep sense of hope for the country and pride in the teaching profession. Hope, because I have never encountered a group of people so genuine in its commitment to change for the good of their students and for the country.

The teachers I met openly talked about their shortcomings and hardships.

One public school principal candidly admitted she did not want to share power with her subordinates. She felt that her position was something she earned and her teachers would just have to "wait for their turn."

Another principal talked about how difficult it was to request for a substitute teacher. There was a time, she said, that she requested for a substitute teacher in June but got one at the end of the school year. To make matters worse, the substitute could not even handle the subject matter for which a teacher was needed.

I felt this was what our country really needed—people like those teachers who did not shrink from the truth because it was hard but instead faced it head on.

I also felt so much pride in the teaching profession.

The teachers I met took their work to a higher level. The fact surfaced after viewing the film "The Emperor's Club," which was about a high school teacher who struggled to instill positive values in his students.

Some teachers cried because they empathized with the lead character. Others shared their own struggles with their students and came to the conclusion that, if they wanted their students to live uprightly, then they themselves had to live with integrity.

This, to me, showed that they were teachers not just because they needed jobs but because they hoped to make a difference in someone's life.

My experience in the Education Revolution definitely broadened my perception of my profession. It is true that the blessings I attain and the blessings that I share come from choosing to be a teacher. But meeting these teachers is certainly so empowering. It erased any doubts about my decision to teach.

More importantly, meeting the teachers reassured me that despite the trials of teaching, I definitely am in good company.

The author is a member of the FWWPP's Mentoring the Mentors Facilitation Team.

MENTORING the Mentors facilitation team: (standing, back row) Dr. Celia Adriano, the author, Dr. Amor de Torres and Dr. Evelyn Mejillano (seated, center), with participating teachers from teacher education institutions affiliated with the Philippine Association for Teacher Education in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (Pafte-ARMM)

THE AUTHOR (left, front row) and the Mentoring the Mentors facilitation team with Davao City principals and master teachers

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c Loss of the cellular phone unit whilst in or on any form of public conveyance or public place unless the cellular phone unit is taken from client by actual or threatened force.
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g. Loss within deductible.
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c. Wear and tear or gradual deterioration of the cellular phone unit's performance.
d. Mechanical and electrical breakdown or malfunction without accident
e Damage to or malfunction of the cellular phone unit caused by or attributed to the operation of a software virus or any other software based malfunction;
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a Insurer reserves the right to refuse the coverage of a particular unit or nullify this policy in case of fraud or any attempt thereat
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The insured must take all reasonable steps to safeguard the insured's property and to avoid accidents which may lead to damage or loss.

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In the event of any incident which may give rise to a claim, the client can only file through the Insurer's "Service Centers" and "Branch Office" and must
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3. Immediately notify without delay either the Insurer's Head Office or any of the Branch and servicing outlets
4 Furnish the insurer with the following within 10 days
A. Damage claim
a Proper Identifications
b Bring the damage unit
c Payment Slip and/or Official Receipt
d Accomplish Claims Report form
e Any requested documentation to support the claim
B. Loss Claim
a Proper Identifications
b Police Report & /or excerpt from the blotter (reported within 24 hours from the time of accident)
c. Payment slip and/or Official Receipt
d Accomplish Claims Report Form within 48 hours
e Any Proof of ownership
f Any other requested documentation to support the claim.

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A glimpse of Mindanao in Intramuros

THE "BEST of the Regions" showcase at Clamshell 1 in Intramuros, Manila, resumes after a break of more than three months with the "Pasundayag Northern Mindanao."

Ongoing until Aug. 24, the show is open 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Tuesday to Sunday, and 3-10 p.m. Monday. Showcased are Region 10's premier tourist destinations, diverse culture and best-selling products.

Tourism Secretary Roberto "Obet" Pagdanganan said Region 10 offered diverse tourist attractions like waterfalls, rivers, springs, beaches, dive sites, caves, hills, mountains and historical structures.

Among the featured attractions at the regional show are cultural performances, replicas of some of the Region 10's famous destinations like the Misamis Occidental Aquamarine Park, the Canopy Walk in Claveria, Misamis Oriental and Iligan City's Maria Cristina Falls; and booths selling local products—from delicacies to gift items, to tour packages.

SUBAYAN Keg Subanon Festival highlights the lifestyle of the Subanons.

PSI Asia Team in Manila: (standing) Karen Medenilla, Pilar Quintos-Francisco (president), Issa Confesor, Clara Laygo, Camille Martinez; Mel Pamintuan and Joey Guillermo

Leadership center marks 18th anniversary

PSI Asia-The Center For Leadership celebrates its 18th anniversary on Aug. 22 at the Meralco Foundation in Ortigas Extension, Pasig City.

All PSI graduates of Kids, Teens, Basic, Starshooters and Heroic courses, their families and friends, are invited to a whole-day family celebration from 9 a.m.-9 p.m. The event will feature games, food and drink booths, bazaars, a concert and other surprises. Entrance fee is P200 inclusive of packed lunch. Call 8131188 to 89 or 8131197.

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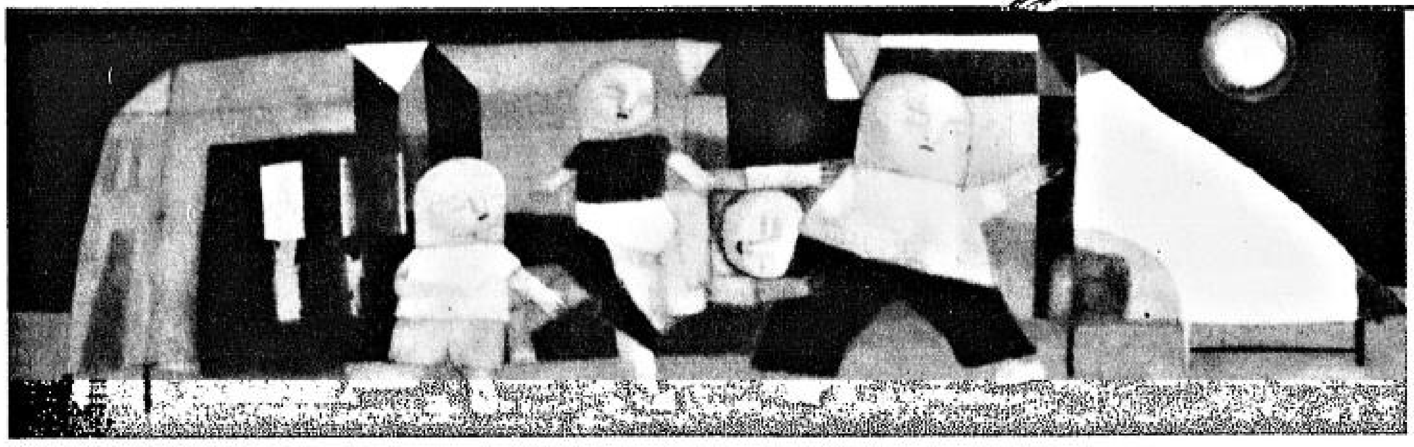
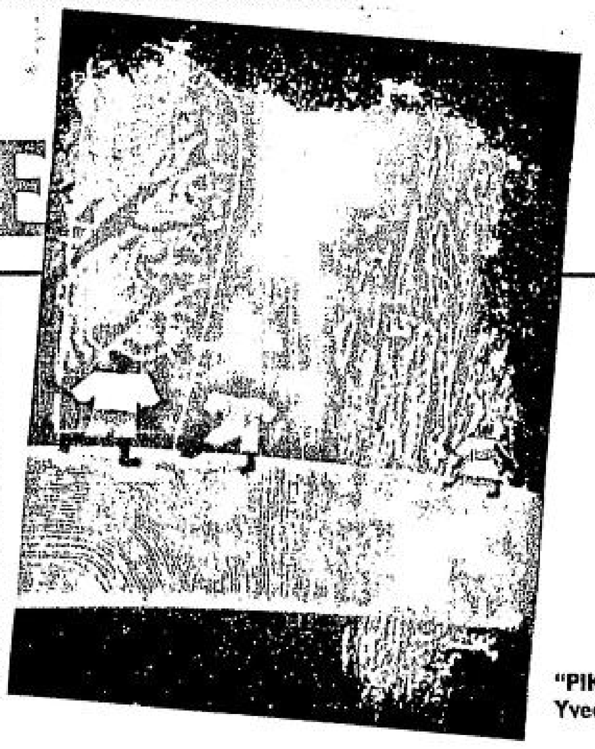
LIFESTYLE


"ANGKAS," by Romeo Forbes


"PIKO," by Yveese Belen

Playful colors of Yveese Belen and Romeo Forbes

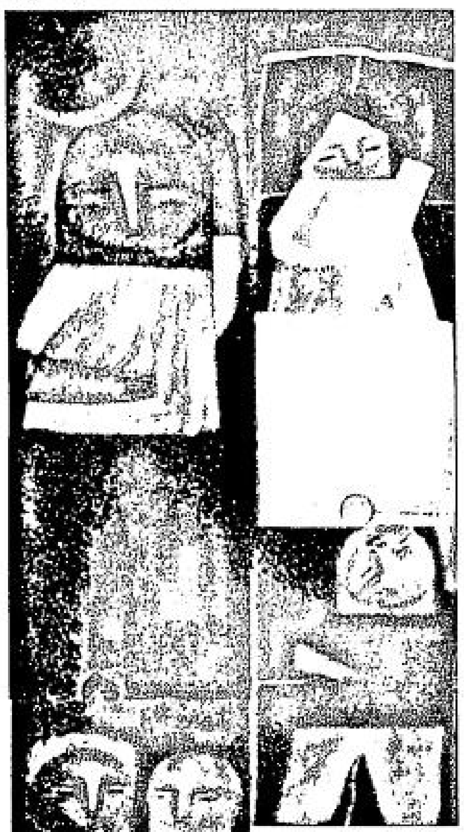
YVEESE Belen and Romeo Forbes present a collection of oil on canvas works in "Laro, Laro, Sinta."

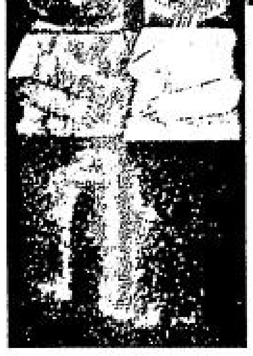
Belen retains her verve with colors in her series of frolic and leisurely bonding while exhibiting eclectic skill as she departs from her previous watercolors. A marked use of darker tones as her backdrops are contrasts to her erstwhile splashes of vermillion and yellows against stark white expanses, the current pieces exuding a more solid air. Testament perhaps to the strengthening niche that the young painter steadily carves for herself in the art scene.

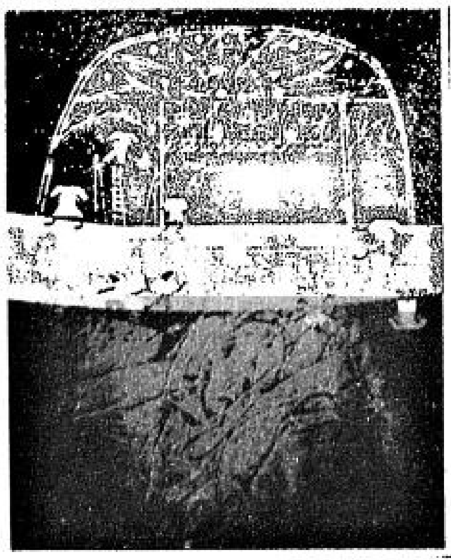
Forbes, on the other hand , explores a more somber palette of grays, blacks and whites, with occasional vibrant reds. This minimalist streak does not compromise his expressionalist stamp, effectively alluding to the more nostalgic and even contemplative aspects of play.

Belen and Forbes are both grand prize winners of the Petron art contest.

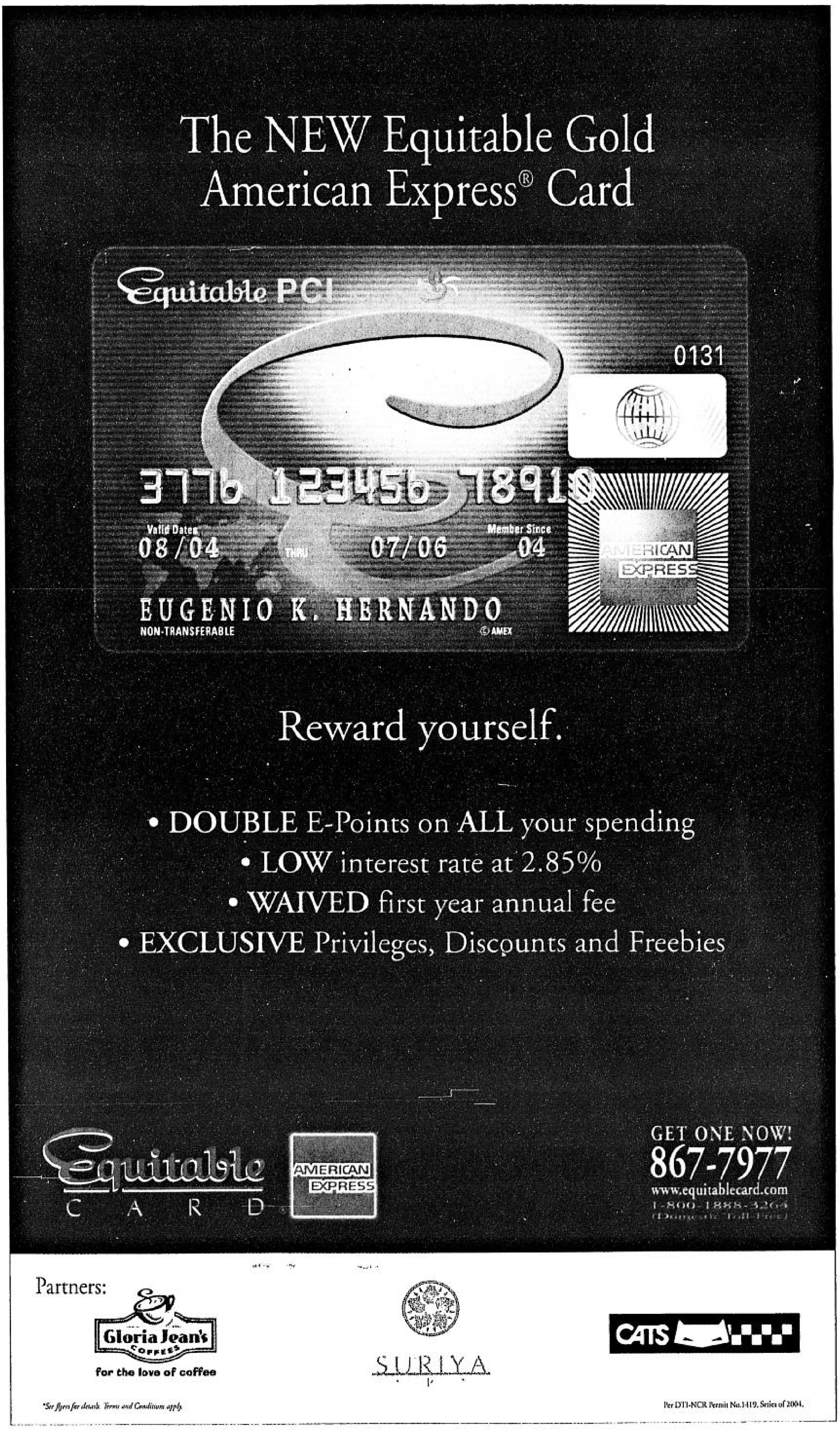
The show runs on Aug. 16 to 26 at Gallery Nine, 4/L Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. Call 6877302.


"BADMINTON," by Forbes


"JACK en poy," by Forbes


"PARAISO," by Belen

"DISCOVERED," by Belen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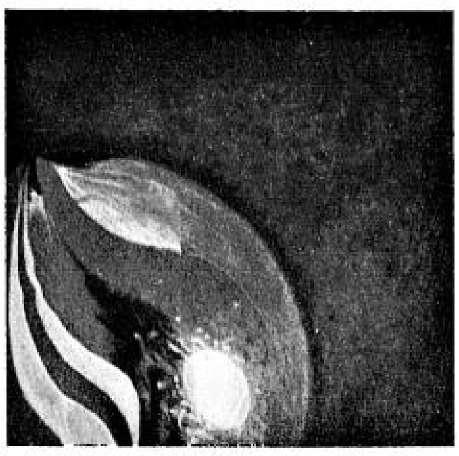
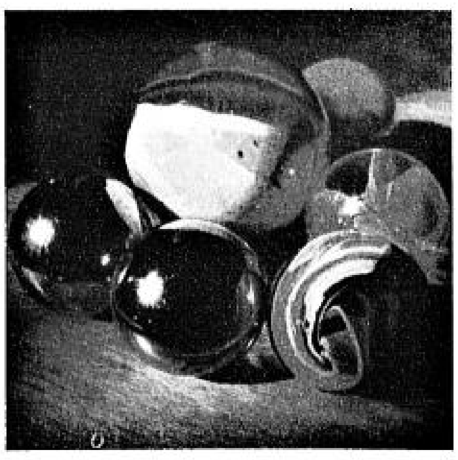
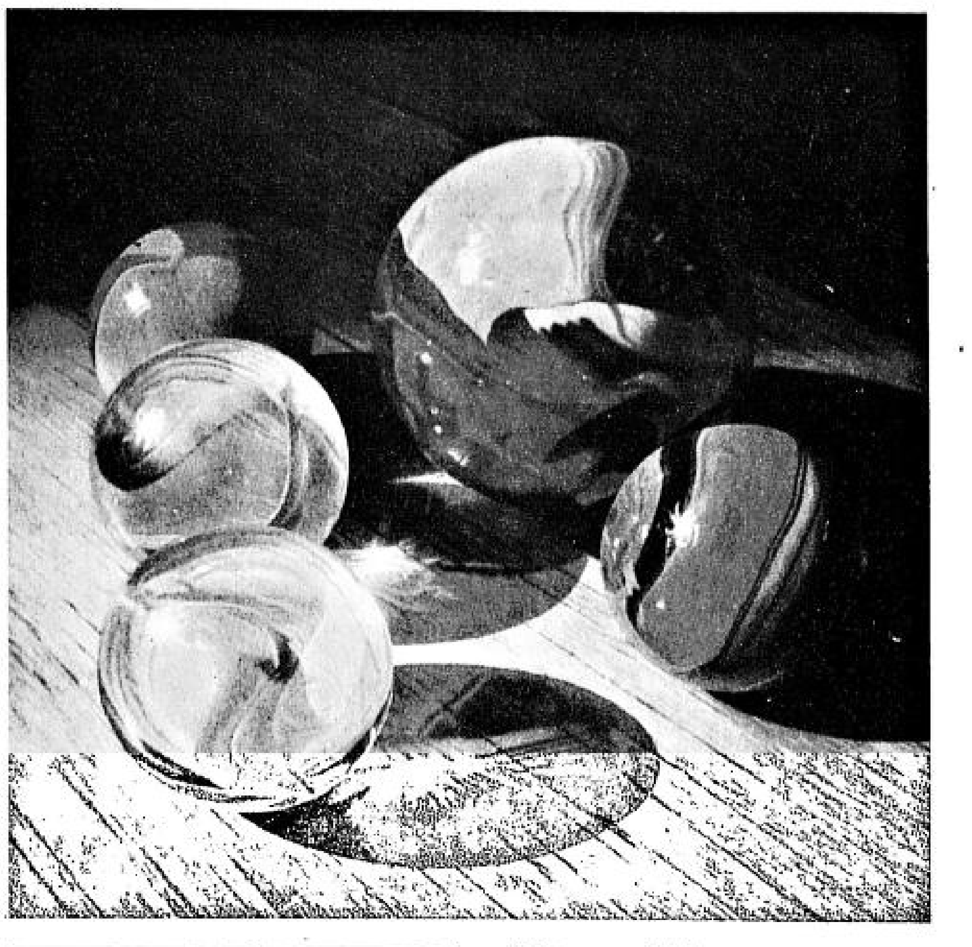






"PEEK," "Accidental Drama 2" and "Accidental Drama 1"

Cabangon's child's play, Piano's adult piety

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THERE is something ominous in the recent work of E.J. Cabangon, from the teasing title down to the mesmerizing images. Called "Hanging at the Moment," the exhibit at Big & Small Art Co. (Art Walk, 4/F SM Megamall, until Aug. 26) alludes to the particular moment toys and related objects remain in a state of suspended animation.

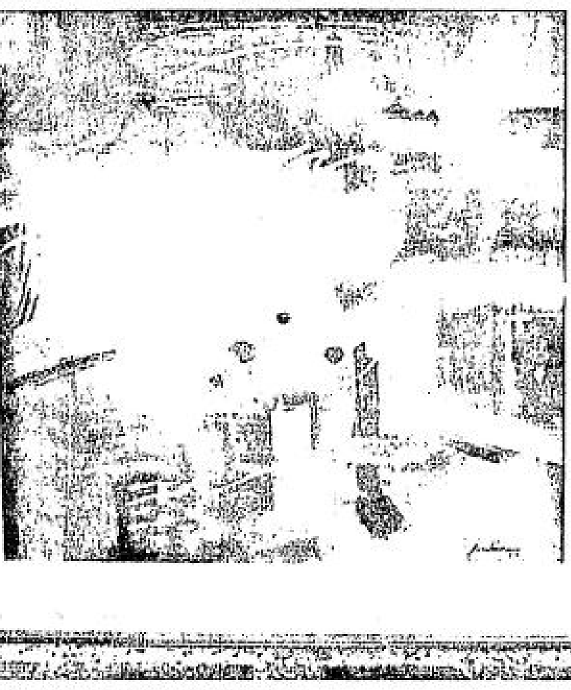
Ranging from clothespins dangling on wires to marbles casually strewn on the floor, these are everyday gadgets of work and play, the former for the harried housewife and the latter for kids on the prowl.

It will be recalled that only last year, the 31-year-old artist, who dabbles as an art director for a publishing firm, initially gave full vent to his fascination with marbles, literally blowing them up, in the manner of Georgia O' Keefe, and exposing their magical interiors and innate luster.

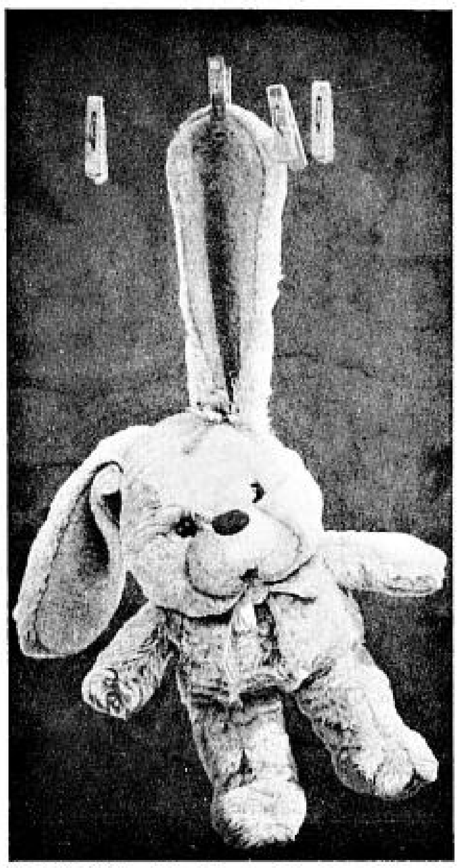
A sell-out, the show lured both young and old to the photo-realist wonders of Cabangon's brush and palette, particularly his renditions of what looked like blown-up atoms whirling in space.

This time, Cabangon continues to elaborate on the role of playthings on the child's imagination, particularly marbles and stuffed toys, and the effects of momentary deprivation by elders who may decide to suddenly keep these things, or dry them in the sun, away from their owner's sight. It can result, he seems to be saying, in a sudden fit of tantrums, or, even worse, in destructive behavior. Children become deeply attached to their toys.

A collector of the most unusual marbles and stuffed toys, Cabangon intimately knows the mind of a child, and the psychological ramifications once a child loses something he has been attached to. Though marbles are no longer popular in our time, they have become a designer accessory. Stuffed toys, on the other hand, are here to stay, and will remain a fixture in today's increasingly playful milieu.'



"PEACE Bearer," by Pancho M. Piano



"HANGING at the Moment"

Cabangon's manifold virtues are his dexterity with colors (he was trained by Ibarra de la Rosa), which border on the neo-hues, and his remarkable adeptness in rendering the likeness of the subject. His sense of wonderment and empathy with children, a quality truly rare among adult artists, will surely propel him to more heights.

Piano's abstractions

The art of Pancho Piano is anchored on the painter's indigenous roots and hard-core religious education.

Born in Lagonoy, Camarines Sur, Piano had to work at a young age to support his six younger siblings. It was in illustration that he first made a name for himself, catching the eye of Jose Joya, who recommended Piano for a scholarship at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts.

Today, Piano is better known as a muralist and a specialist in stained glass, having done more than a hundred commissions in various churches, municipal buildings and residences.

He has also taken up abstraction, and it is in this genre that Piano has begun experimenting with paint and other materials.

His sense of color is quite unsparing and effervescent, something that he unabashedly resorts to in jazzing up his compositions.

In the current show, "Hapros" (the Bikol term for *haplos*) at the Asia Art Gallery in Shangri-La Mall (until Aug. 16), Piano has a good mix of his ecologically slanted works, and those that run along quasi-religious themes.

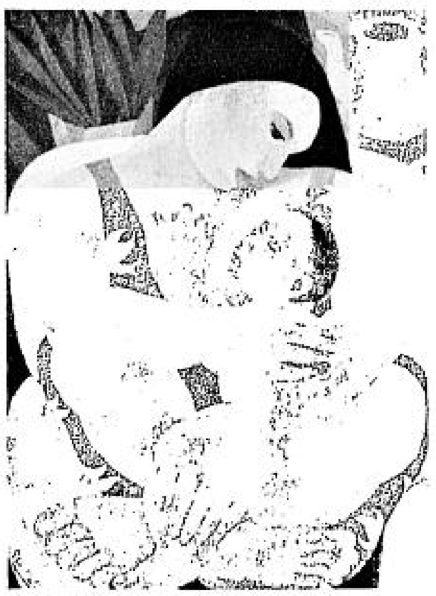
The abstract expressionist touch is also clearly articulated, from the vigorous brushwork to the collage-like rendering, which is Joya's legacy.

Piano is equally enamored with found objects, though he can do with some measure of restraint in using ornaments like colored plastic and stones.

Still, Piano knows how to best stimulate the viewer in an explosive array of colors, which perhaps is innate in the character of someone from the region, even without any side show from the now-imperfect Mayon.

E-mail feedback to gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Orobia's images of women



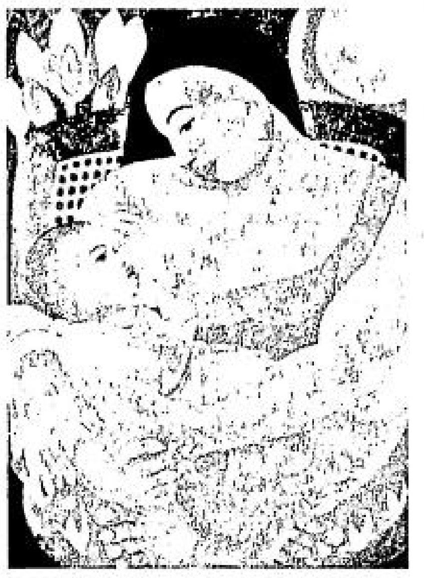
"MOTHER AND Child"

MAESTRO R. Orobia, founding president of Kapisanan ng Mga Pintor sa Pilipinas at Iba pang Sining, Inc., is holding his 14th solo exhibition, "Anatomy of a Woman," at the UST Museum of Arts and Sciences.

The exhibit features large-scale paintings of nudes and Mother and Child.

The exhibit runs until Sept. 10. Call the UST Museum (7811815) or the Kapisanan (5691812).

The UST Museum is the mezzanine of the UST Main Bldg., España, Manila.



"MADONNA and Child"

Baldemor wows Europe

MANUEL D. Baldemor has just returned after four months in Europe.

Last March, he was chosen as the first Filipino artist to be given a residency by the Fundacao Orienté of Lisbon, Portugal. His one-month residency was spent at Arrabida Monastery.

He then exhibited his works in Europe under the auspices of Foreign Secretary Delia Albert.

Baldemor exhibited in Chelsea Library Art Gallery of London, with the help of Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu.

He also exhibited at the PosthoornKerk of Amsterdam, where Ambassador Romeo Arguelles and Honorary Consul Eppo Horlings opened the show.

Ambassador Victoria Bataclan also helped Baldemor in exhibiting in Sweden, Norway and Finland.

At the United Nations headquarters in Vienna. Baldemor unveiled his mural "Pasasalamat," on the lobby. Commissioned by the U.N., the large multi-media work skillfully transfers the essence of the artist's largely folk images to other cultures.

Reproductions of Baldemor's works adorn Unicef greeting cards, which have been sold worldwide for the past 14 years.

MANUEL D. Baldemor

Olan Ventura at West, Villaruel at Mag:Net, Wilwayco at Duemila

VISUAL ARTS

OLAN Ventura creates individual portraits of his very own household in "Family Portrait," at the West Gallery in Glorietta 4 on Aug. 19-31. The show reaffirms Ventura's strength in figurative detailing as shown in his new openness to color. Ventura studied at University of the East. He was a finalist last year in the Philippine Art Awards. Call 7527028 or 7527029.

MAG:NET Gallery at Paseo Center Bldg., Paseo de Roxas and Sedeno St., Makati, features Alvin Villaruel's "Entry Points" on Aug. 17-Sept. 1. The artist uses blurring to defamiliarize images of entry and exit. Through this, everyday objects become transitional terrains. Call 8177895.

GALLERIA Duemila mounts Edwin Wilwayco's "Whispering Winds" on Aug. 19-Sept. 3 at 4/F Megamall A. The exhibit features abstracts tracing the elements of nature.

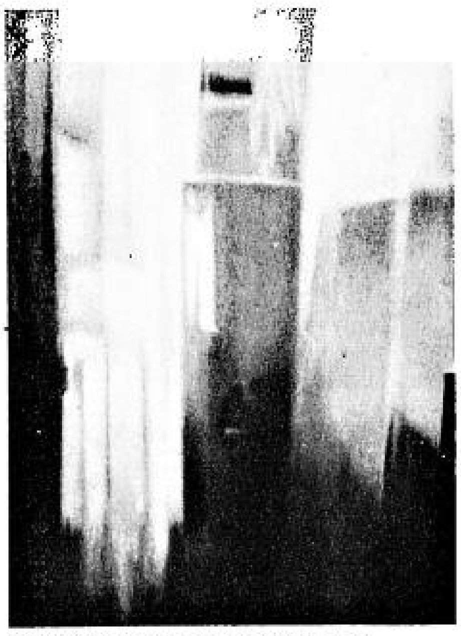
INTERCONTINENTAL Manila and the Cancer Support Group present "Faith, In Memory of Joe B. Salazar." This photo exhibit by cancer survivors and caregivers will open tonight at 6:30 at the InterCon's lobby Art Café.

THE CRUCIBLE Gallery showcases Jerusalino Araos' "Roots" on Aug. 17-29 at 4/F Megamall A. The exhibit features functional sculptural pieces for daily use.

HIRAYA Gallery presents "Saan Ka Nanggaling, Saan Ka Darating" on Aug. 19-Sept. 10 at 530 UN Ave., Ermita, Manila. Imelda Cajipe-Endaya offers a look-and-see into the Filipinos' responses to the events of the 20th-century Philippines.

ANTHONY Fermin and Karla Gobin are showing their latest works starting Aug. 20 at the Food and Art Galerie, 12/F GT Tower, Ayala Avenue cor. dela Costa St., Makati. Fermin will exhibit watercolors and acrylics on children's themes and Gobin will show social realist and surreal works in oil and pastel.

ALFREDO Liongoren and his children Avid, Erik and Hana will hold simultaneous individual exhibits of their recent works on Aug. 22-Sept. 25 at Pintô Art Gallery (1 Sierra Madre St., Grand Heights, Antipolo). Alfredo will showcase watercolors and acrylics; Avid, digital works and drawings; Erik, photographs; and Hana, drawings and digital illustrations.



"ORANGE Room," by Alvin Villaruel

GALLERY 139 features Cheryl Villanueva Hironaka's "Art+Furniture" until Aug. 25 at 3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. Her works are mixed media masterpieces that blend modeling paste, lace and pencil with acrylic on paper.

THE AUSTRALIAN Embassy presents Judy Watson's "Sacred Ground, Beating Heart" at the Main Gallery of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The exhibit, until Aug. 26, features Watson as an image-maker and chronicler of Aboriginal land.

A WORKSHOP on the basics of drawing and painting will be held every Saturday, 10 a.m.-12 noon, starting Aug. 21 at Herald Suites, Chino Roces Ave., Makati. To be conducted by E.R. Tagle, the program is open to children, 3-12 years old, and adults, 13-83 years old. Call 8996358/ 0927-5522288.

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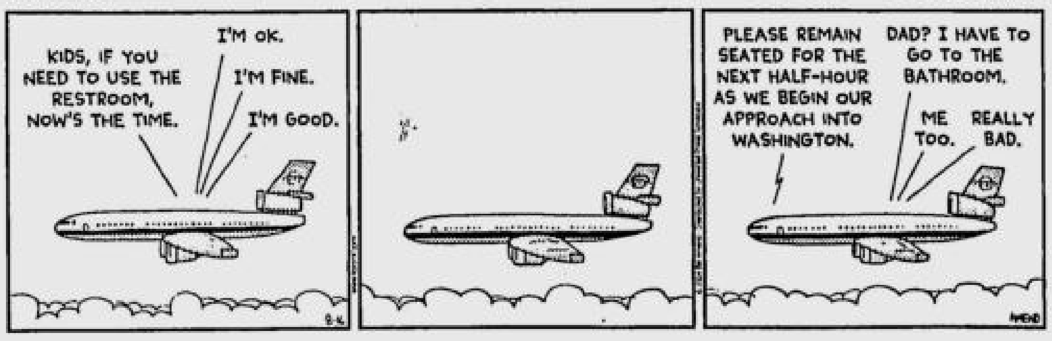
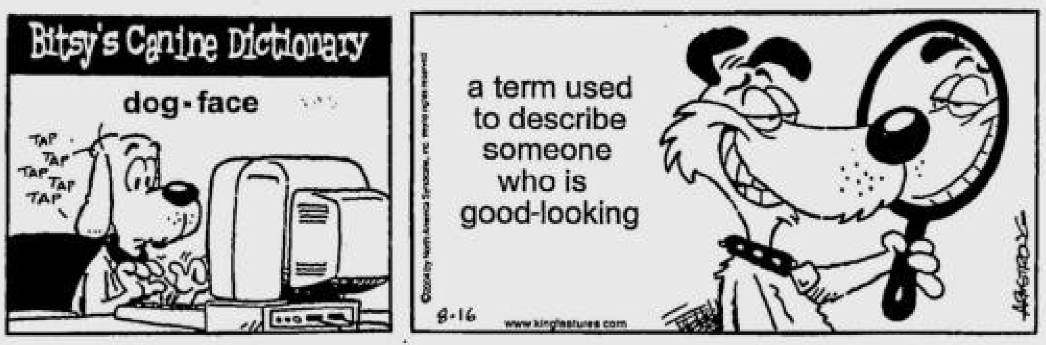
BY BILL AMEND


KIDS, IF YOU NEED TO USE THE RESTROOM, NOW'S THE TIME.
I'M OK.
I'M FINE.
I'M GOOD.
PLEASE REMAIN SEATED FOR THE NEXT HALF-HOUR AS WE BEGIN OUR APPROACH INTO WASHINGTON.
DAD? I HAVE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM.
ME TOO.
REALLY BAD.

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG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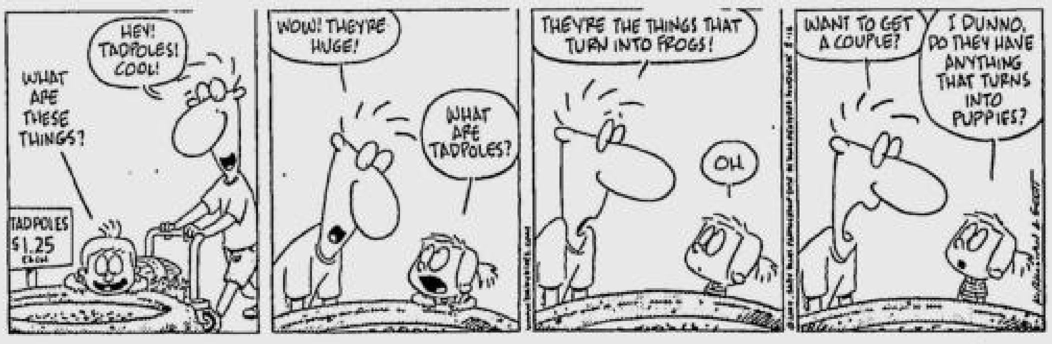
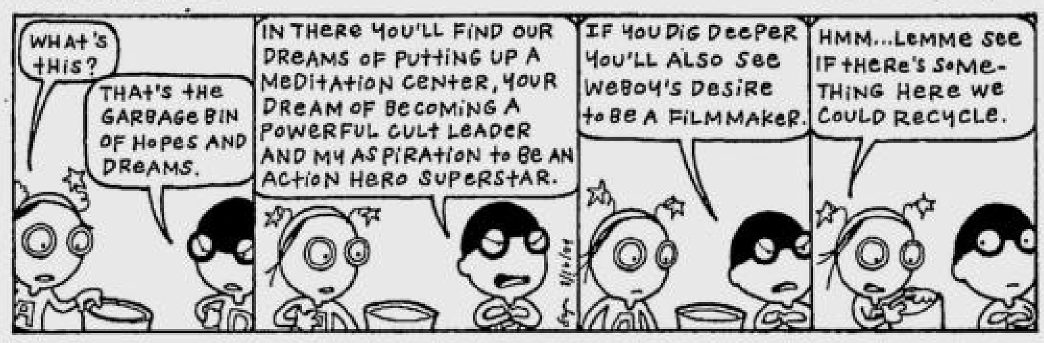
BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT ARE THESE THINGS?
HEY! TADPOLES! COOL!
TADPOLES $1.25 EACH
WOW! THEY'RE HUGE!
WHAT ARE TADPOLES?
THEY'RE THE THINGS THAT TURN INTO FROGS!
OH.
WANT TO GET A COUPLE?
I DUNNO. DO THEY HAVE ANYTHING THAT TURNS INTO PUPPIES?

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHAT'S THIS?
THAT'S THE GARBAGE BIN OF HOPES AND DREAMS.
IN THERE YOU'LL FIND OUR DREAMS OF PUTTING UP A MEDITATION CENTER, YOUR DREAM OF BECOMING A POWERFUL CULT LEADER AND MY ASPIRATION TO BE AN ACTION HERO SUPERSTAR.
IF YOU DIG DEEPER YOU'LL ALSO SEE WEBOY'S DESIRE TO BE A FILMMAKER.
HMM...LEMME SEE IF THERE'S SOMETHING HERE WE COULD RECYCLE.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have strong, almost electric energy. You believe in living life to the fullest. You're bold, dramatic and ready for adventure. You're not afraid to be outrageous, because you simply go after what you want. You have a need to triumph and be victorious. You will have to make an important choice this year. Think carefully.

Birthdate of: James Taylor, musician; Madonna, entertainer; Angela Bassett, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're in the mood to get organized. You're full of resolve. Begin by reducing the clutter in your life, both at work and at home. (Everything begins with a thought.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're feeling very playful now. This is an excellent time for a vacation. You want to relax; you also want to indulge yourself in pleasant hobbies.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with a parent or family member are particularly significant today. Use your influence to soften family tension if you can. Others will listen to you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a busy day of errands, shopping and running around with various appointments and tasks. You're talking to everyone, but it's all on the fly!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): There's something you want to buy, and this is a good day to do it. You've been spending money lately; but it just seems to be the thing to do right now!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Four planets are in your sign now. The world is having a Virgo moment. This is good for you, because it means opportunities and helpful people are attracted to you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You've been so busy seeing people lately you need some time to be by yourself. You might find it hard to do this because everyone wants to see you now.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Tension with a friend requires a bit of diplomacy. Don't blow a friendship over something that doesn't really matter. Give this some serious thought, because friends are valuable and rare.

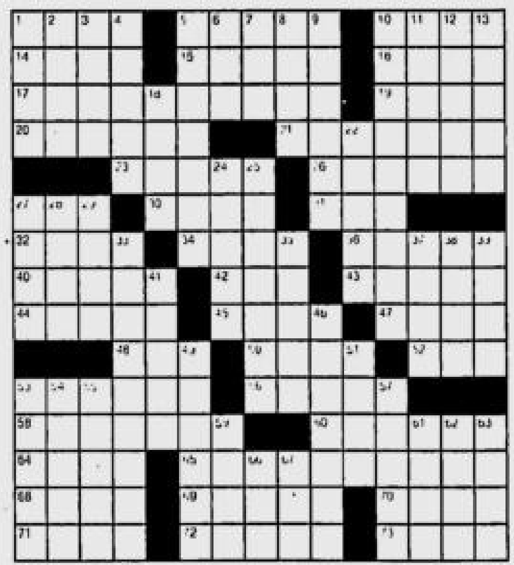
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is quite a powerful time for you now. You're ambitious, and it shows. This is a good day to ask for a favor from someone who can influence your situation.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Four planets are in Virgo, which is your fellow Earth sign. This supports all your plans for travel, education, publishing and working in the media.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have been extremely fortunate this year. Gifts and goodies seem to come your way. Many of you will inherit and receive benefits from others.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): With four planets opposing your sign now, you have to tread carefully. Be cooperative with others. Don't do anything to encourage opposition to your ideas.

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

8/16/04

ACROSS
1 Head-over-heels
5 Notes, defined and anagrammed
10 Cut and run
14 Greenspan of the Fed
15 Eschew a big wedding
16 Toast topper
17 Second man on the moon
19 Gymnast Korbut
20 Computer messages
21 HUAC target
23 "Bellefleur" author
26 Redford or Goulet
27 Tree juice
30 Part of a casa
31 Sprinter Boldon
32 Applaud
34 Wedding token
36 Kick out
40 Permit
42 Fuss
43 Be off
44 Buccaneers' home
45 Droops
47 Pirouette
48 Ventilate
50 Depressions
52 Key near ctrl
53 Die of hunger
56 Pie section
58 Soda-shop orders
60 Southwest people
64 Part of ABM
65 Figwort family member
68 Deli breads
69 Dali's stand
70 Over with
71 Tasty dessert
72 Slack-jawed
73 Omelet need

DOWN
1 Comic Kaplan
2 College grad
3 Huxley novel, "Eyeless in ..."
4 WWII landing site
5 Early satellite
6 Aged
7 Neither good __ bad
8 Heroic tale
9 Leon lady
10 Portable music players
11 Kukla's pal
12 St. John Perse
13 L'chaim or slainte
18 Bummer!
22 Highway stop
24 Inventor Howe
25 Forum footwear
27 Beat it, Fluffy!
28 Actress Nazimova
29 Hand part
33 Lichtenstein, e.g.
35 Author of "Dead Souls"
37 One of the Three Bears
38 Really, really bad
39 Spring season
41 Relinquish
46 Defraud
49 Indian arm
51 Wound locater?
53 Chic
54 Singer Tucker
55 Take in pants, e.g.
57 Skirt
59 Glitch
61 Highly excited
62 "Fear of Flying" author
63 Singles
66 King of Judea
67 Enthusiastic vigor

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

S	P	L	U	R	G	E	■	S	W	A	P	P	E	R
C	R	O	N	I	E	S	■	T	H	W	H	I	T	E
H	O	S	A	N	N	A	■	R	E	E	N	A	C	T
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N	O	A	H	■	■	M	A	D	E	■	E	R	L	E
L	I	N	E	S	M	E	N	■	D	O	R	I	A	N
A	L	G	R	E	E	N	■	S	I	G	N	E	T	S
D	E	L	B	E	R	T	■	O	T	R	A	N	T	O
D	R	E	S	S	E	S	■	S	H	E	L	T	E	R

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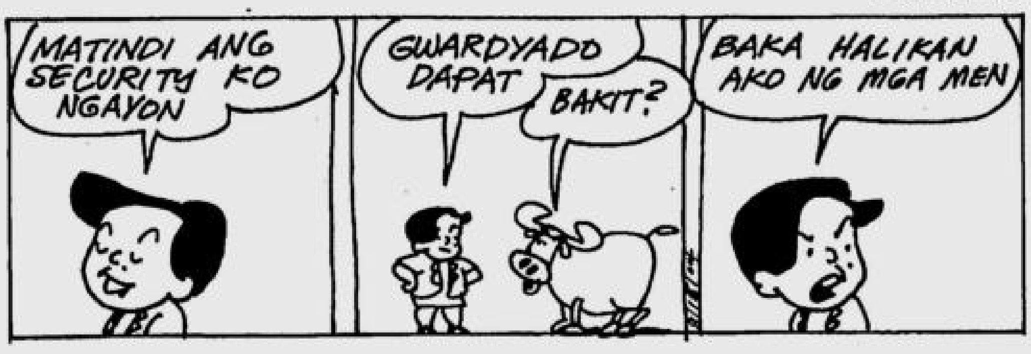
8/16/04

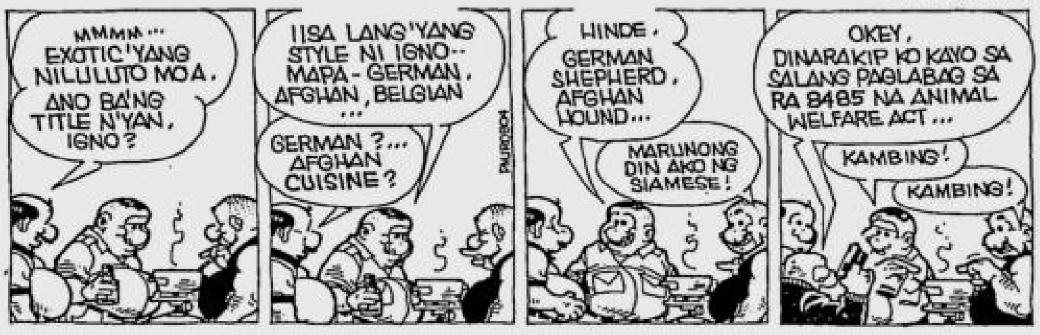
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MATINDI ANG SECURITY KO NGAYON
GUARDYADO DAPAT
BAKIT?
BAKA HALIKAN AKO NG MGA MEN

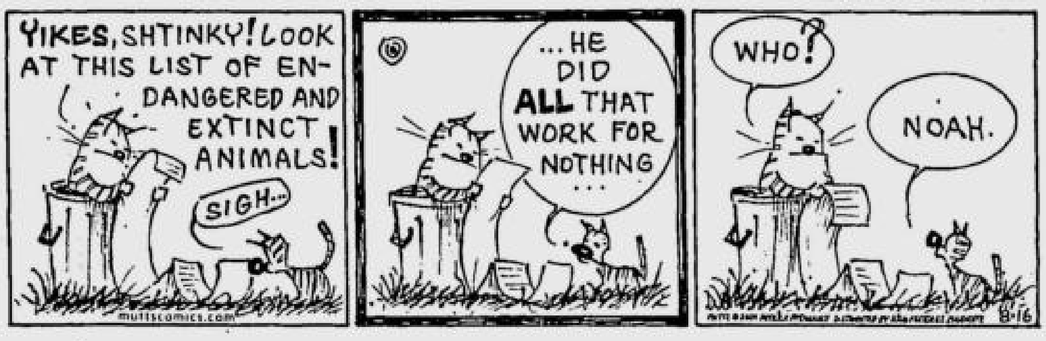
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MMMM... EXOTIC 'YANG NILULUTO MO A.
ANO BA'NG TITLE N'YAN, IGNO?
IISA LANG 'YANG STYLE NI IGNO-- MAPA-GERMAN, AFGHAN, BELGIAN ...
GERMAN ?... AFGHAN CUISINE ?
HINDE. GERMAN SHEPHERD, AFGHAN HOUND...
MARUNONG DIN AKO NG SIAMESE!
OKEY, DINARAKIP KO KAYO SA SALANG PAGLABAG SA RA 8485 NA ANIMAL WELFARE ACT ...
KAMBING!
KAMBING!

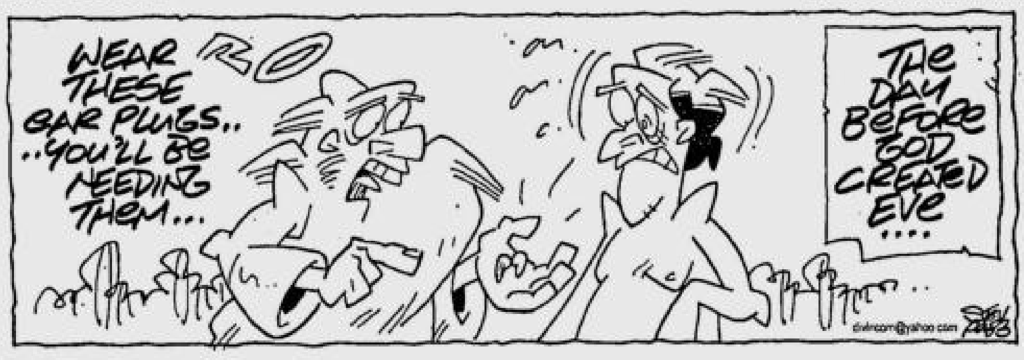
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


YIKES, SHTINKY! LOOK AT THIS LIST OF ENDANGERED AND EXTINCT ANIMALS!
SIGH...
...HE DID ALL THAT WORK FOR NOTHING ...
WHO?
NOAH.
muttscomics.com
8-16

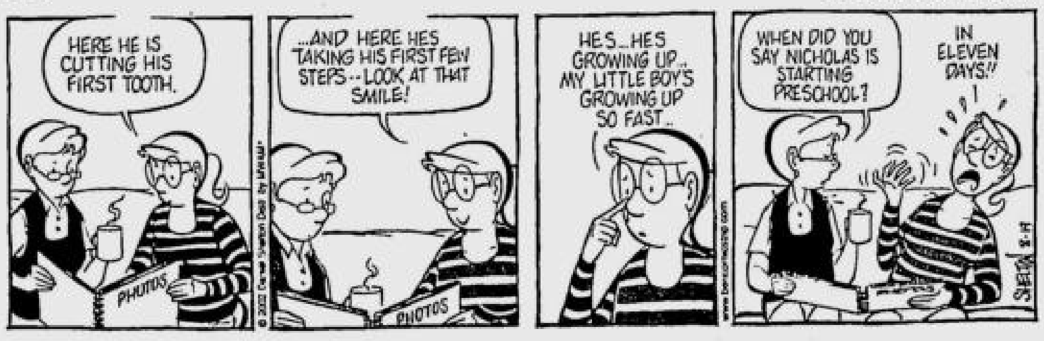
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WEAR THESE EAR PLUGS.. ..YOU'LL BE NEEDING THEM...
THE DAY BEFORE GOD CREATED EVE ....
divincom@yahoo.com

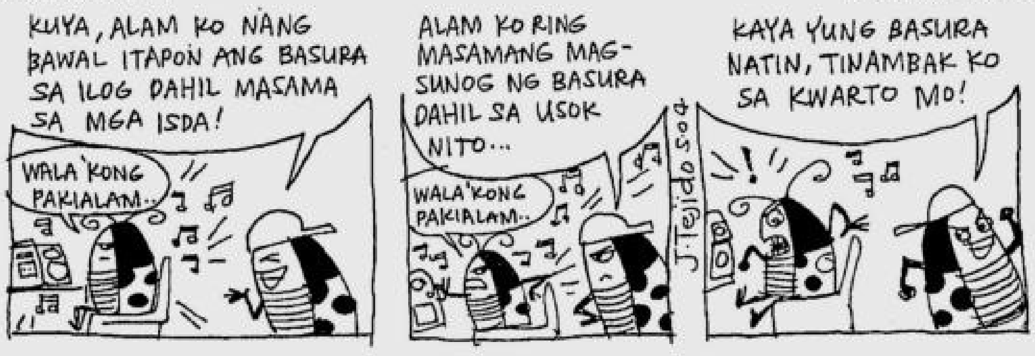
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HERE HE IS CUTTING HIS FIRST TOOTH.
PHOTOS
...AND HERE HES TAKING HIS FIRST FEW STEPS--LOOK AT THAT SMILE!
PHOTOS
HES...HES GROWING UP.. MY LITTLE BOY'S GROWING UP SO FAST..
WHEN DID YOU SAY NICHOLAS IS STARTING PRESCHOOL?
IN ELEVEN DAYS!!

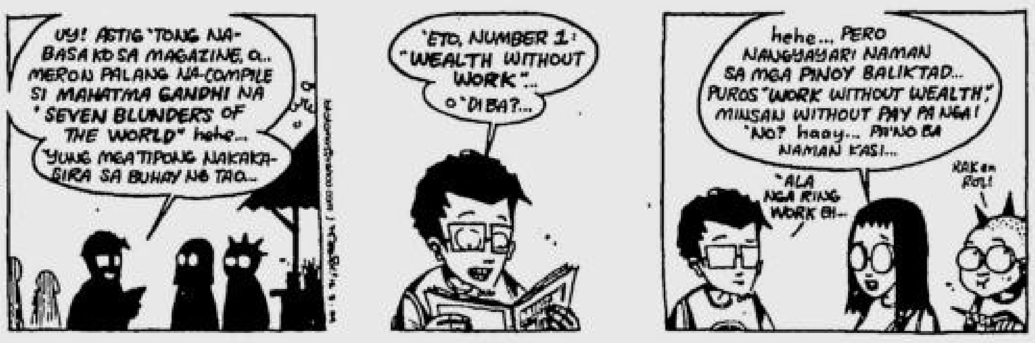
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


KUYA, ALAM KO NANG BAWAL ITAPON ANG BASURA SA ILOG DAHIL MASAMA SA MGA ISDA!
WALA 'KONG PAKIALAM..
ALAM KO RING MASAMANG MAGSUNOG NG BASURA DAHIL SA USOK NITO...
WALA 'KONG PAKIALAM..
J.Tejido 5.04
KAYA YUNG BASURA NATIN, TINAMBAK KO SA KWARTO MO!

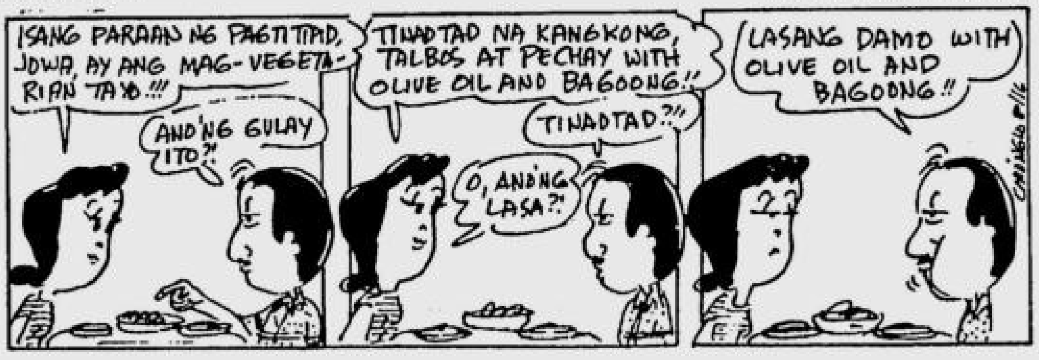
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY! ASTIG 'TONG NABASA KO SA MAGAZINE, O.. MERON PALANG NA-COMPILE SI MAHATMA GANDHI NA "SEVEN BLUNDERS OF THE WORLD" hehe...
'YUNG MGA TIPONG NAKAKASIRA SA BUHAY NG TAO...
'ETO, NUMBER 1: "WEALTH WITHOUT WORK"... O 'DIBA?...
hehe... PERO NANGYAYARI NAMAN SA MGA PINOY BALIKTAD.. PUROS "WORK WITHOUT WEALTH", MINSAN WITHOUT PAY PA NGA! 'NO? haay... PA'NO BA NAMAN KASI...
"ALA NGA RING WORK EH..
KAK en ROL!

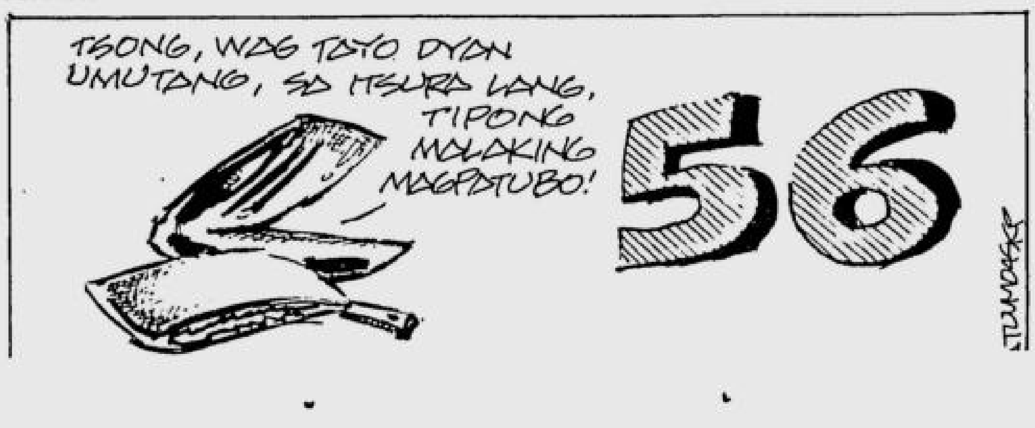
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ISANG PARAAN NG PAGTITIPID, JOWA, AY ANG MAG-VEGETARIAN TAYO!!!
ANO'NG GULAY ITO?!
TINADTAD NA KANGKONG, TALBOS AT PECHAY WITH OLIVE OIL AND BAGOONG!!
TINADTAD?!!
O, ANO'NG LASA?!
LASANG DAMO WITH OLIVE OIL AND BAGOONG!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TSONG, WAG TAYO DYAN UMUTANG, SA ITSURA LANG, TIPONG MALAKING MAGPATUBO!
56

1

SNUG the wick between the slashed space of the rubber mold to support the wick. Close the mold. Secure with at least two tight rubber bands. Stand the mold upright.

2

MAKE sure the bottom pan of your double boiler is half-filled with water before you start heating.

Throw approximately 200 g of used candle into the upper pan of the double boiler.

Position the double boiler above the electric hot plate.

Caution: Melting wax must not be left unattended. Overheated wax will ignite.

3

SHOULD the wax ignite, turn the heat off. Eliminate the fire by covering it with the lid or sprinkling with baking soda. Do not use water since it could lead to a fire spread.

Turn the heat to low or medium low.

Allow the wax to melt into a clear liquid until it reaches 82° C or 180° F.

4

WHEN the wax has reached 82° Celsius, turn the heat off and remove the pot from the pan. Pour the wax very slowly into the mold.

Allow the wax to form a skin on the surface. Immediately punch holes along the sides of the wick all the way to the center. Allow the wax to cool for 30 minutes.

Refill the wax at 82° C all the way to the top.

Allow the wax to cool for approximately two hours.

5

GENTLY open the mold. Trim off the excess wick from the base, and from the top to ¼ to 1/8 of an inch.

How to recycle used candle scraps into decorative candle

ARTIST Victor Bella, author of the highly acclaimed art instructional video series featuring Candle Making, Flower Sculpture and Glass Painting Made Easy, offers this candle project that's easy to do in the convenience of your own home.

"Victor Bella Instructional Video Collection"—for information on how to do wax and gel candles, including formulation, scenting, coloring, and molding techniques. Instructions may be performed by both kids and adults. Kids must be at least 9 years of age but must perform candle-making under the supervision of an adult.

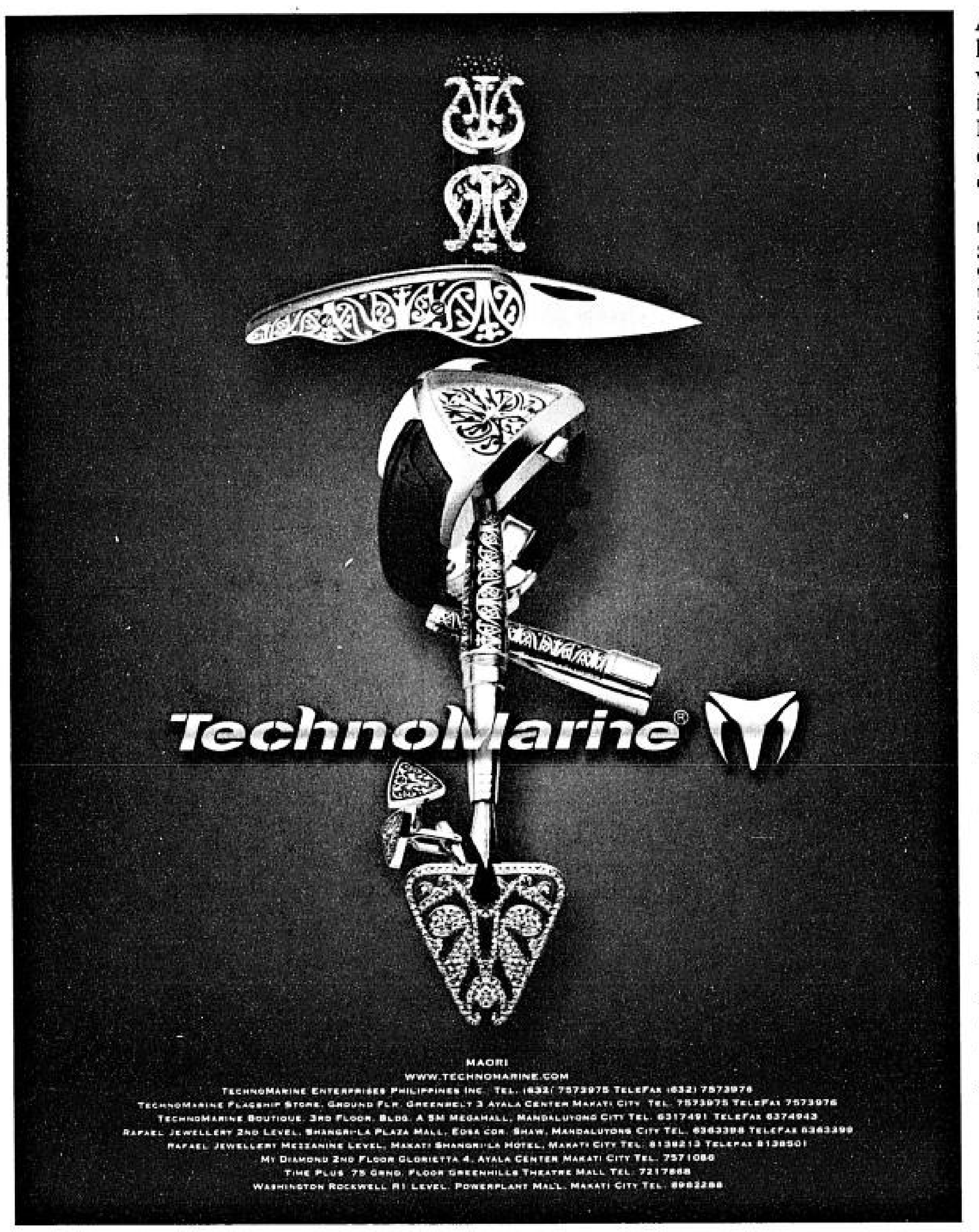
Materials:

200 g of used or leftover candle scraps
Wick
Victor Bella's animal figure rubber mold
Candy or candle-making thermometer
Skewers
Masking tape
Double boiler
Oven gloves
Weight scale
Electric hot plate or gas stove

Enjoy your creation. Discover more candle-making secrets by ordering Victor Bella's "Arts and Crafts" video collection featuring Candle Making, Flower Sculpture, Glass Painting. To order videos, rubber mold and other art materials, call 0920-4880029. Video products may be viewed at www.geocities.com/victor_bella/videos.html including project samples. Special discounts to be offered to the first 10 callers.

Flower Sculpture Made Easy
Decorative Can
Made Easy

ARTIST Victor Bella's art instructional video series



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Filipino and Korean artists hold joint exhibit at GSIS Museum

WORKS of Philippine artists were well-received in the recent Korean Fine Art Biennale exhibit at the Danwon Arts Museum in Ansan City and the Asian Art Festival at the Red, Green, White and Blue galleries of the Insa Art Plaza in Chongno-Gu, Seoul, Korea.

The invitational events were organized by the Korea Fine Art Association and Korea Insa Art respectively, in cooperation with the Art Association of the Philippines (AAP). A delegation of AAP officers represented the Filipino artists at the launching ceremonies.

The shows bridged cultural gaps by artistic exchange. They also afforded emerging artists the chance to showcase their works alongside those of more established figures.

The Manila Biennial presents the same collection by Filipino and Korean artists. The local leg of the continuing "goodwill through art" activities opened last Aug. 11. It is ongoing at the GSIS Museum.

KOREA FINE ART
한국적 - 감성의
2004. 7. 24(Sat

AAP officers Fidel Sarmiento, Ral Arrogante, Dems de la Cruz, Noel Catacutan and Buds Convocar at the Danwon Arts Museum in Ansan City, Korea, during the opening of the Korea Fine Art Biennial

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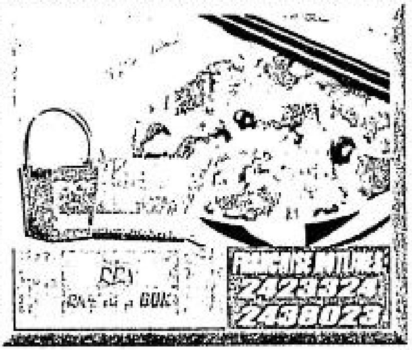
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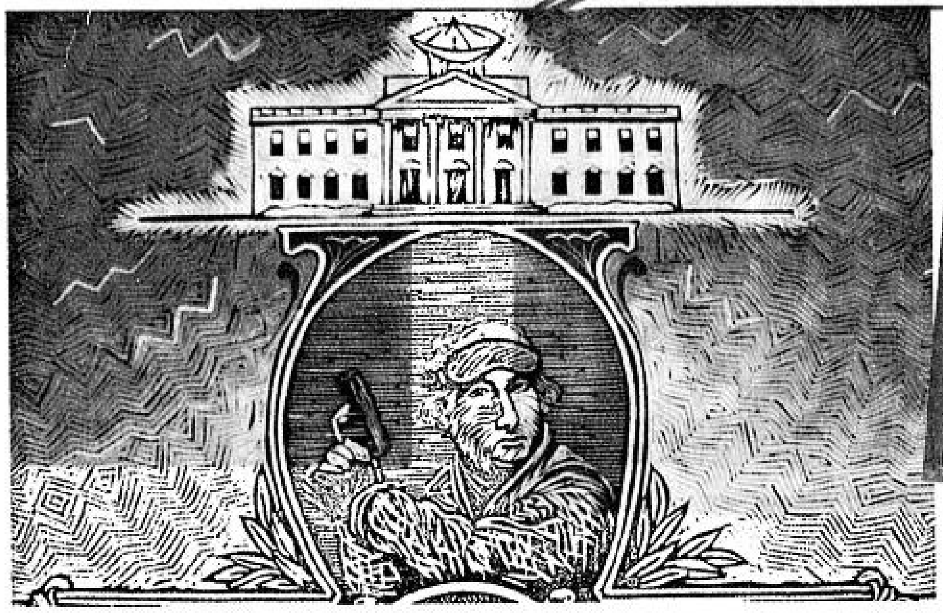

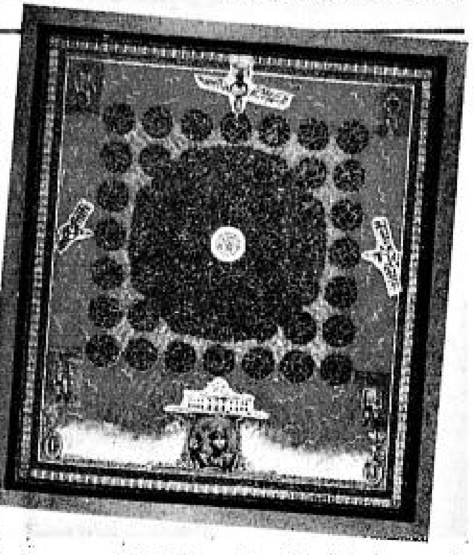

"GOD is on Our Side," by Leonardo Aguinaldo (above); detail of the rubber-cut mixed media work (left)

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The tough road to the Asean Art Awards

Text and photos by Anne A. Jambora

I THANK God, who is on my side," comically exclaimed one of Baguio City's unassuming Tam-awan artists, Leonard L. Aguinaldo, who took home the Grand Prize in the recent Asean Art Awards held at the Ballroom of the Shangri-La Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand, for his mixed-media work "God Is on Our Side."

Named Best Emerging Asean Artist of 2004, the 35-year-old's visually arresting mandala tapestry of rubber-cut work in printer's ink and oil—with soldiers and satellites and riflescope crosshairs bordered by bullets—hit the bull's-eye in the biennial art competition sponsored by Philip Morris Asia Ltd.

There is a strong political message in Aguinaldo's work, of stark images inspired by the dollar bill, with a White House prominently in the background and a soldier holding his sidearm in the air; of the Islamic symbol of the crescent moon in the artwork's corners lined by bullets; of the world at the center of the gun's crosshairs.

But its many layers of meaning, in true mandala form, lies in the intricate swirls and whirls of his hand-carved rubber that he glued together piece by piece.

"This is based on my experience of what's happening around us—the US military, how they want to dominate the world, the Christian and Muslim conflict which in some ways reflect the Philippines," Aguinaldo says.

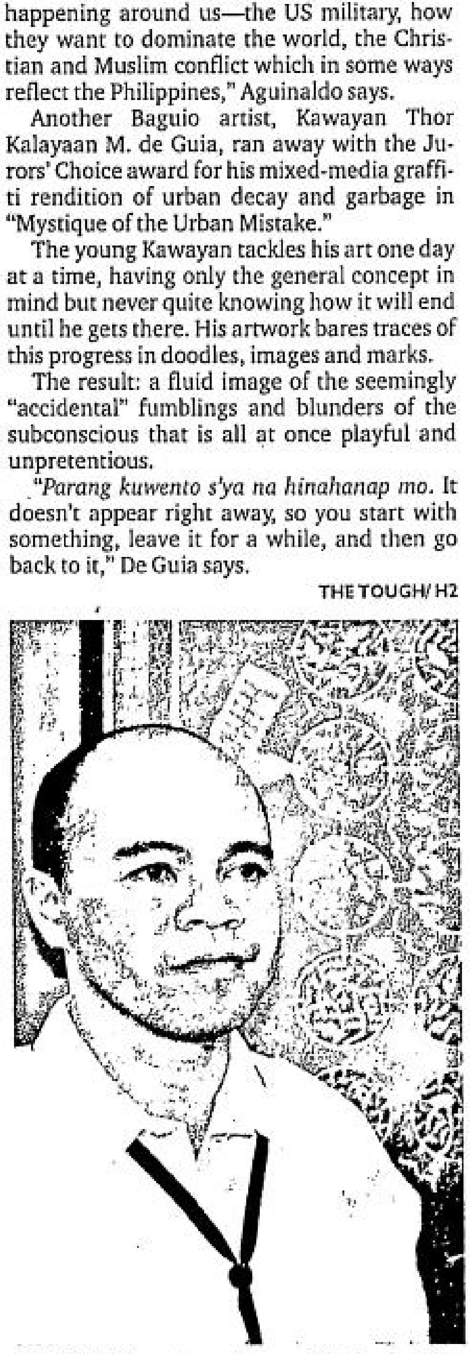
Another Baguio artist, Kawayan Thor Kalayaan M. de Guia, ran away with the Jurors' Choice award for his mixed-media graffiti rendition of urban decay and garbage in "Mystique of the Urban Mistake."

The young Kawayan tackles his art one day at a time, having only the general concept in mind but never quite knowing how it will end until he gets there. His artwork bares traces of this progress in doodles, images and marks.

The result: a fluid image of the seemingly "accidental" fumblings and blunders of the subconscious that is all at once playful and unpretentious.

"*Parang kuwento s'ya na hinahanap mo.* It doesn't appear right away, so you start with something, leave it for a while, and then go back to it," De Guia says.

THE TOUGH/ H2



GRAND Prize winner Leonard L. Aguinaldo: *"Maganda mag-*explore *ng bagong* medium *at bagong paraan ng* expression."

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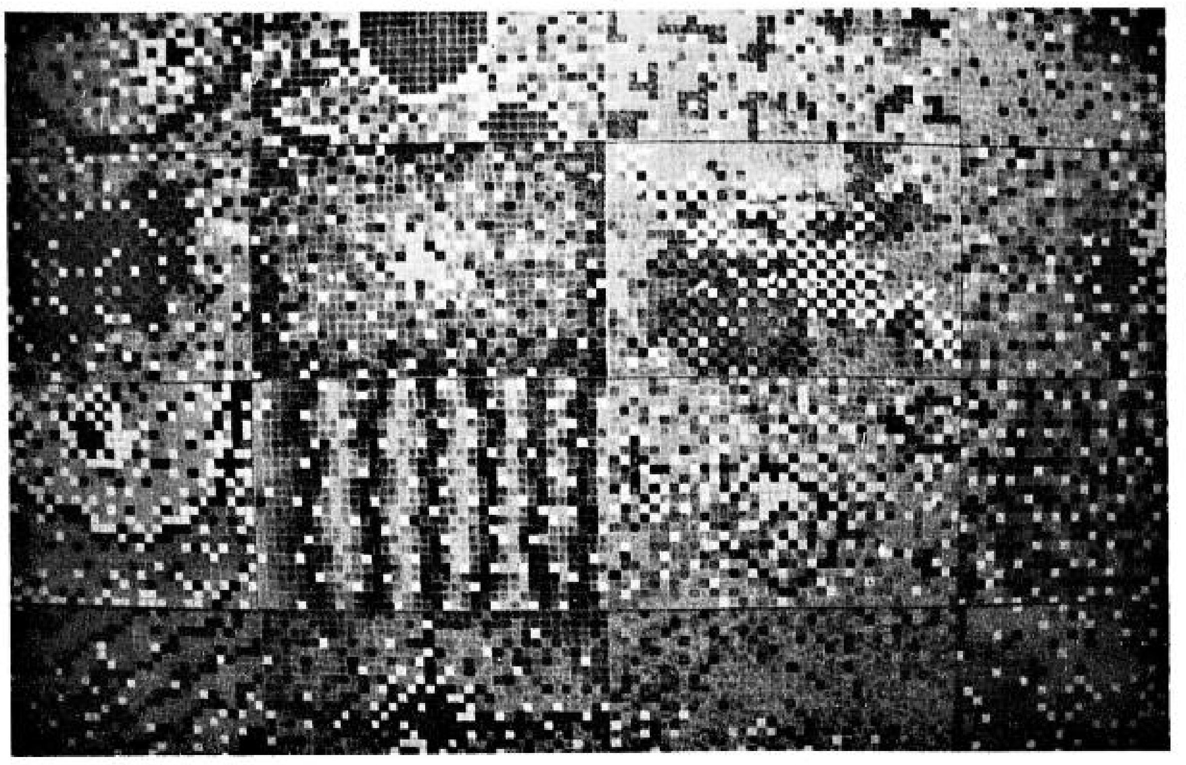
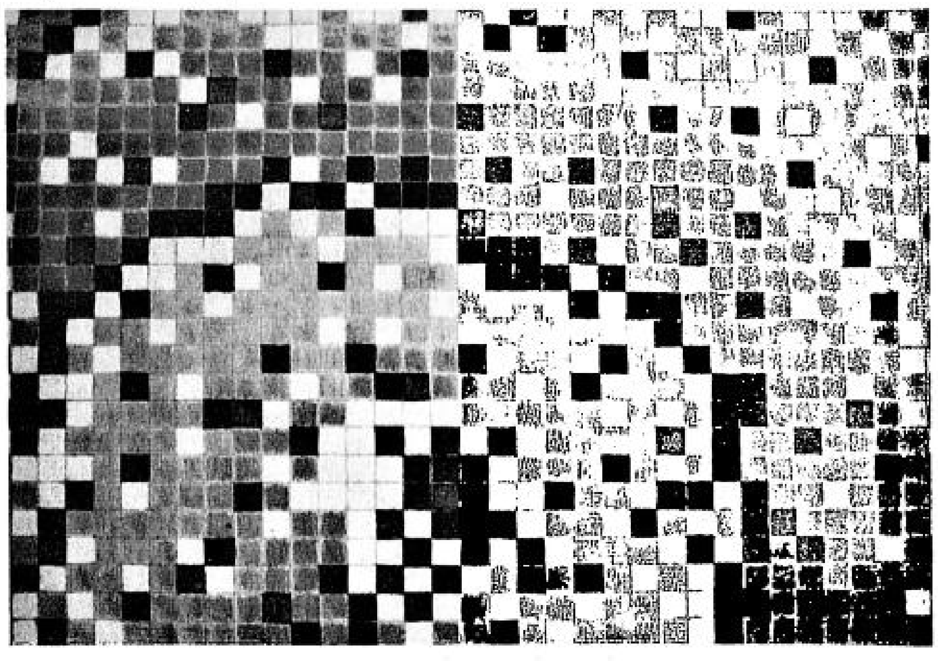




"AVOIDING Behaviour"

Startling iridescence

By Constantino C. Tejero

UNUSUAL art has been created by Juan Alcazaren in "Avoiding Behaviour," 29 pieces using colored pencil, ball pen, correction fluid, until Aug. 17 in West Gallery at the Artlane, L/3, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center.

The pieces are composed of grids, each little square filled with various colors. The correction fluid is used to form white squares, which appear like highlight when seen at a distance.

All colors of the color wheel are used by the artist. The hues vibrate, shimmer. In some pieces, patterns emerge, but in most it's just random juxtaposition of hues, either monochromatic or clashing.

Alcazaren compares his art-making process to working on a jigsaw puzzle. He says he started with the idea of obsessive drawing.

The work was continuous, the strokes repetitive, the entire act time-consuming. He worked an average of two days on each piece, eight hours a day. The result is Art Informel, vivid, vibrant and dynamic.

But this isn't so formless an art after all. In fact, each piece resembles a set of computer-generated pixels. And when put together, they look like parquetry, or wide swathes of iridescent snakeskin or alligator skin, or a Byzantine mosaic of tiny colored ceramic tiles or shards of glass.

"I tried to be random while doing them," says the artist. "I didn't consciously look for subjects. But I couldn't avoid the pattern... Behavior is pattern."

Included in the exhibit are the stubs of assorted colored pencils Alcazaren used up on his obsessive drawings. These he has collected in a glass-covered box-type frame, installed on the wall like a medicine cabinet, and titled "Crocket & Stubbs."

Alcazaren would like to think of himself as a multimedia artist. He is also into film animation, sculpture (welded metal, wood construction) and installation (found materials, junk).

He took up Landscape Architecture and some foundation courses in Sculpture at University of the Philippines. He says what he learned from landscape architecture he is able to apply on his art-making, in terms of technical skills, design principles and conceptualizing the project.

As painter, his usual medium is enamel paint on canvas. "I prefer non-art materials. Because they're related to my installations and sculptures."

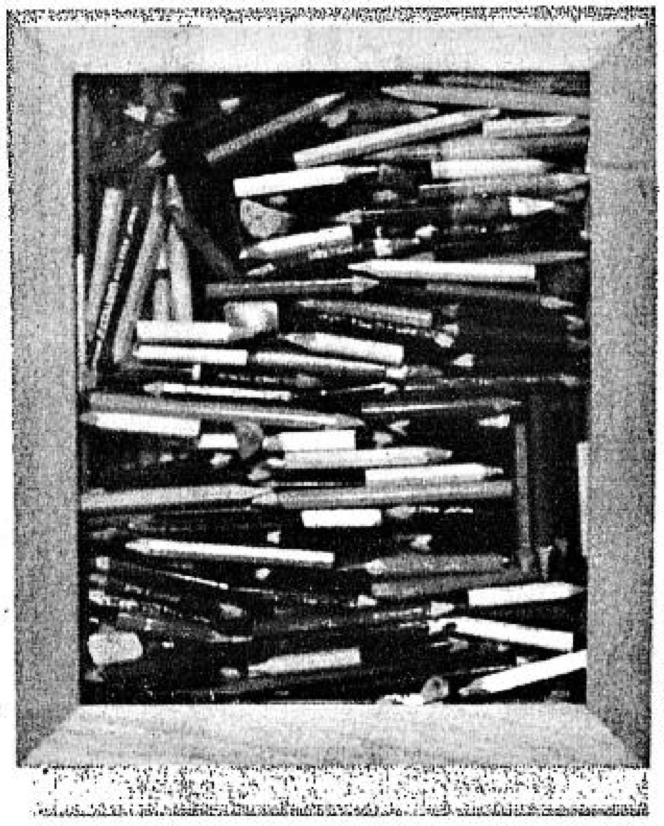
Although there's no figuration for him now, he hasn't closed the door on it yet. "I'm just looking for a way that would interest me in it in the future."

Artists he admires include Roberto Chabet, Nilo Ilarde, Jonathan Olazo, Bernardo Pacquing. He also likes the British Richard Wentworth (found materials) and Picasso (the sculptures).

Thai artist Krisanamis fascinates him. "He's an obsessive artist who once did a collage of newspaper pages which he painted over, leaving out only the letter O, and glued noodles on the canvas."

And so does British artist Matthew Ritchie. "His painting is always convoluted, in both forms and colors. He doesn't discriminate, *lahat nilalagay n'ya sa* painting *n'ya*."

Clearly these artists' works have been manifesting in Alcazaren's art, one way or another, though the man himself has long found his own voice. He received the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines four years ago.



"CROCKET & Stubbs"

The tough road . . .

From page H1

Distinction

Both were among the five artists who represented the country in the AAA, besting more than 30 entries from seven participating Asean countries. The Philippines, in fact, has won in seven of AAA's nine competitions, and earns the distinction as the only country winning both Grand Prize and Jurors' Choice awards thrice at the same time.

The five-member jury headed by Australian artist Dr. Pat Hoffie only had two days to round up the winners. All five came from non-participating countries, with diverse theoretical backgrounds and preferences.

None had prior knowledge of the artist's name and country of origin of each artwork, AAA's way of ensuring an objective and nonpolitical judging. The artworks were judged based on the originality of the use of the medium/materials, good and polished technique, and content.

"It is always difficult to judge work that is enormously high in caliber," says Hoffie.

Making it to the local Magic Five, however, is another story. Ayala Museum director Dr. Florina Capistrano-Baker says that last year the Philippine Art Awards had the largest number of entries—570. Entries had to be narrowed down to 75, 50, 25, 15, 10 and then the final five.

While the Philippines may have winning entries in seven of AAA's nine competitions, the lack of winners in 1998 and 1999 prompted the need to organize workshops with the local artists, Capistrano-Baker says. Former AAA winners were asked to speak in these educational workshops, where even the judges were asked to sit in.

"We made a study and realized that our artists were addressing only local issues. We needed works that address a larger audience. Don't think locally; think globally. Say it in a language where an international audience can understand," she says.

So they did away with themes and allowed for full artistic freedom. Their efforts, says Capistrano-Baker, were very well rewarded. In 2000, Nona M. Garcia, yet another Baguio artist, won the Grand Prize, the first woman to ever snag the title.

"Unlike other countries whose works look homogenous, you see the richness and diversity of what's going on in the Philippines in our entries," says Capistrano-Baker.

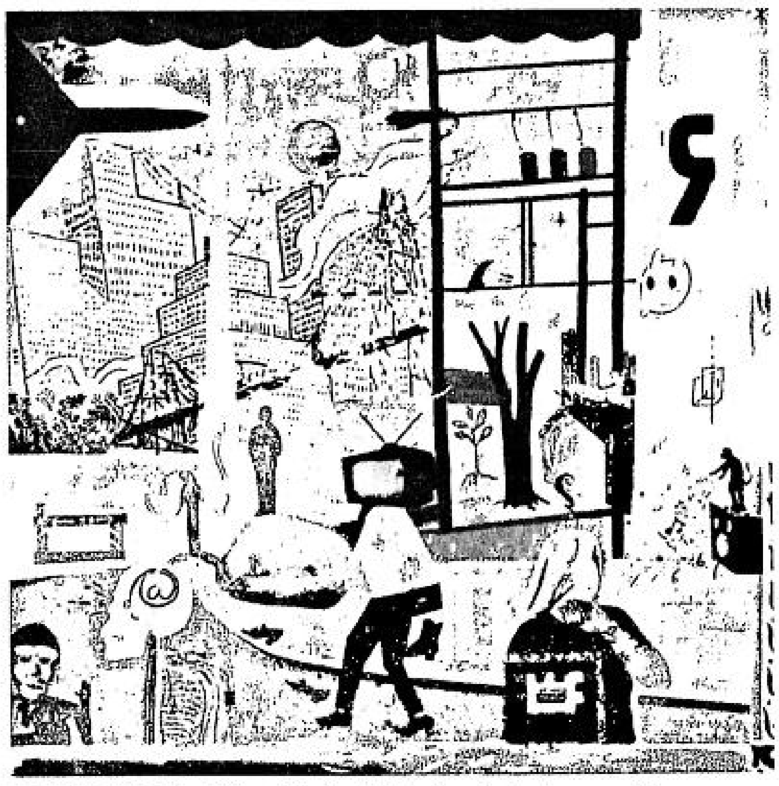
"Preservation of Creation," which took Wilson A. Belarmino three months to finish, is made of animal tattoo pasted on several layers of bamboo.

Vincent Paul Padilla's "Boxed In (De Kahon)," oil on relief canvas, shows the Filipino's repressed urges, thoughts and movements, trapped in a system the person does not necessarily believe in.

"Barren," Don Djerassi Dalmacio's oil on canvas, is the artist's poignant symbol of the bleak future of the Philippines.

"The end goal is not to win the local competition. It is to represent the country and win in an international level," Capistrano-Baker says.

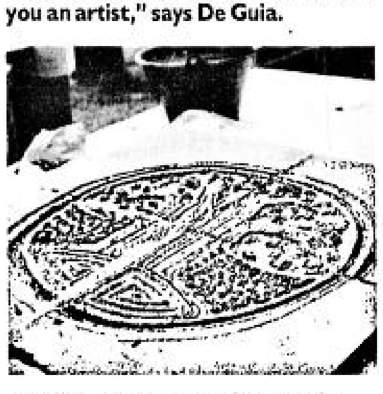
E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph



"MYSTIQUE of the Urban Mistake," mixed media by Kawayan Thor Kalayaan de Guia. The artist's blood, literally, is in this work.

"IT'S partly the way you work, but for me it's really the way you think and experience the world that makes you an artist," says De Guia.

SIGNING a book for a fan. "I have never signed my name so many times in my entire life!"



AGUINALDO's ceramic art, to be presented to Thailand's National Gallery for inclusion in its permanent art collection

Savagery of color, brutishness of form

KNOWN for his Zen sculptures, mixed-media constructions and relief paintings, Roberto M.A. Robles can be paradoxical with his art: bold and muted, elaborate and minimalist, figurative and abstract, neoclassic and postmodern, compact and expansive.

He can work on a large triptych or mural a visual narrative of epic scale, as well as on a little canvas a piece of such concentration it can only be described as a visual haiku.

And he works like a young avant-guard all over again in his latest exhibit, "Rekindling—47 Compositions of Colors and Forms in Relief Space," 12 pieces in acrylic on canvas, until Aug. 17, in Galleria Duemila, L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

These pieces are characterized by the broad strokes of Art Informel, the makeshift quality of Rauschenberg's combine paintings, the intense coloration of the Fauvists.

More than the brutish forms, it is the color that especially grabs us. It has an intensity that hurts the eyes, reminding us of overripe fruits, spilt blood. Such savagery of hues we haven't seen in this artist's previous works.

To be sure, there is still the dull monochrome, as in the tonal variations of blue in Painting No. 12. But most of the pieces possess the vibrancy, the luminosity, of pure color.

The series is dominated by crimson, brilliant red, luminous blue, ripe yellow. These are juxtaposed with purple, ochre, pink, chartreuse, burnt sienna, turquoise, slate, raw umber, but those are overwhelmed by the primary colors.

Despite the seemingly haphazard quality of design, there is a design—and it is a rigorous sense of design. Each piece is actually a study in composition, particularly in perspective and color juxtaposition.

Illusionary depth is attained not only by the use of perspective (grids, apertures, overlapping color planes, windowlike rectangles), but also with the alternation of cool and warm hues, the interplay of color tones, even the texturing and layering of paint.

Robles' usual texturing consists of really thick impasto, overpainting, and overlapping surfaces (by attaching painted canvas strips or some other foreign objects to the piece).

Thus, through illusion and in reality, the painting becomes a relief, the pictorial frame achieves tri-dimensionality. In this sense, the piece is a sculpture on a flat surface, as well as a painting threatening to come out of the canvas.

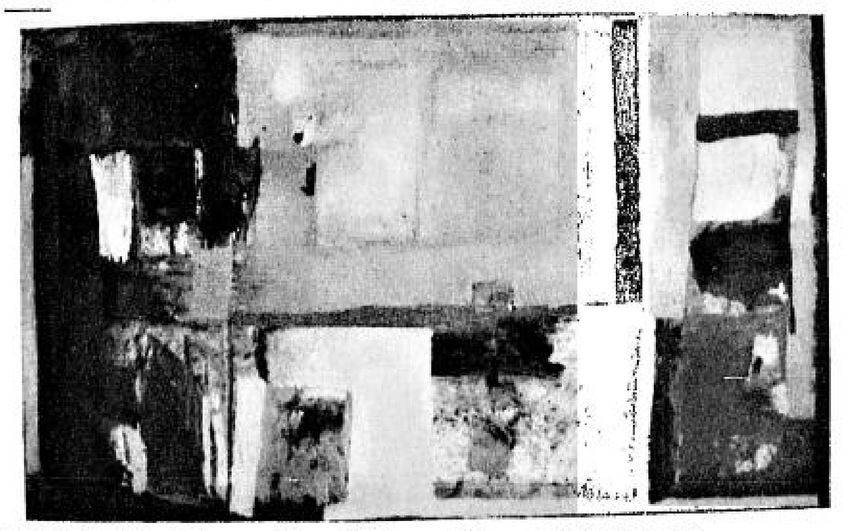
That kind of visual tension is typical of Robles' work. It is present in both his painted constructions (properly speaking, sculptures) and what he calls "painted reliefs" (paintings). This is because he sculpts his paintings as well as paints his sculptures.

Robles was trained as a sculptor, having received his Master of Fine Arts, major in Sculpture, from the Institute of Art and Design of University of Tsukuba in Japan. And so even in a two-dimensional art form he attempts to "replicate the processes and principles of sculpture, producing paintings by using the concepts of the three-dimensional."

His commissioned sculptural works include the baptismal font and holy water receptacle in Thasos white marble in Magallanes Church; and the altar and crucifix in wood, stone and brass at the Eugenio Lopez Development Center.

He had been dean of the University of the East College of Fine Arts, and a faculty member of the Department of Studio Arts (Sculpture) at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts.

Still, he holds an annual exhibit in the malls, and is continually experimenting with various mediums, which is why his art keeps evolving. Indeed, this artist must be thinking young thoughts always, because his art looks fresh and young. *Constantino C. Tejero*

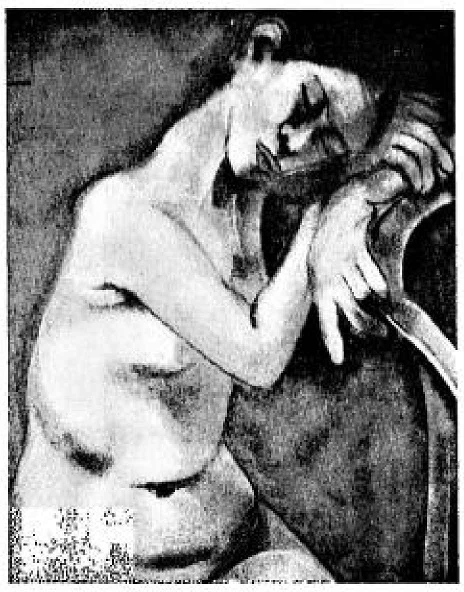


"REKINDLING—47 Compositions of Colors and Forms in Relief Space I"

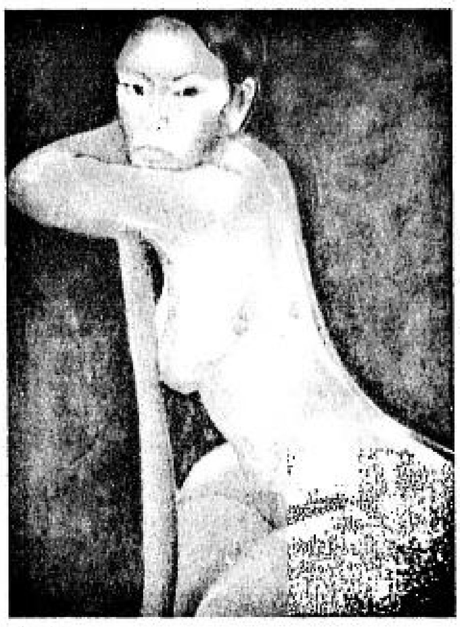
Nude and natural

Allan Cosio displays a naturalist art

By Lito B. Zulueta



THE ARTIST (left), and "III" (above)



"VII"

AGAIN and again, Allan Cosio returns to the nude. In the secret but quite stable coterie of Cosio aficionados, the nude is like an altar: The artist returns to it again and again despite the vagaries of the art market and the swirl of experimentation. It is the common denominator of Cosio's prodigious art.

In fact, Cosio confessed that seldom does a week pass by when he does not do the nude. "To draw the nude is always a challenge," he said. "I have spent half of my lifetime trying to master it. I have not really left it."

His show last year consisted of landscapes that teetered between abstraction and representation. It could be said that he was trying to attain what Vasarely called as the "internal geometry" of things, their structure and soul. And how better to plumb and limn the geometry of things than drawing the nude?

Perhaps it is in the ambience of experimentation that Cosio achieves his best nude effects, that he achieves satisfaction. The artist, in fact, basks in the adventure and unpredictability of painting the nude. "I am very much influenced by what I see," he said. "I just grow more confident. The approach and outcome are still unpredictable, experimental always."

Of course, others may see something sleazy in the nude. Nude sessions have become a dime a dozen; entertainers and publicists and artists seeking quick notoriety exploit it as a marketing ploy. Fashion houses make millions out of underwear fashion and marketing gimmicks that generally show the human figure in various stages of unwear.

But Cosio insisted the artistic nude goes beyond the pale of commerce. "The artist makes the difference," he said. "It is a finger-print-state-of-mind."

Finger print

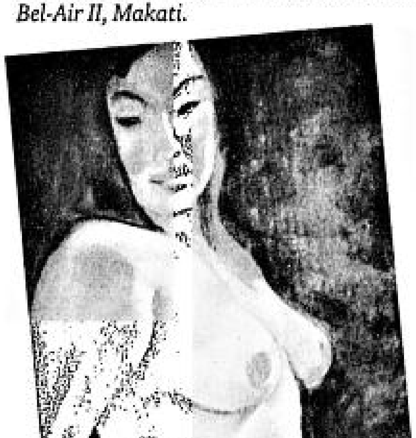
The Cosio "finger print" is quite evident in the new nudes that will go on display at the Alliance Française this week. In oil pastel on velour, the works show the female figure in mid-frame, the body whole but not quite whole, focused but not quite focused on the anatomy, the artistic eye seeming to hover and even psychologically touch it, but never seeming to come into contact.

The colors are sharp and shocking: clayish, coruscating reds, mossy and bluish greens. The white tones of the flesh meld with the wash of robust colors, which shade and complement the nudity. The effect is effervescent, a certain luminosity that somehow pulses the geometry within.

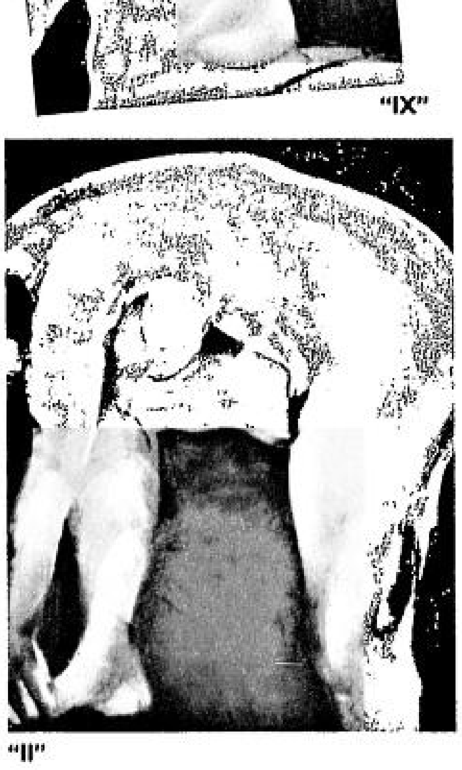
As always in a Cosio work, it is hard to determine the inspiration and derivation for the quaintly stylistic take on the genre. The artist, in fact, disavows any inspiration or original source. "When I see a work I like, I naturally admire who did it," he said. "But it does not mean I like everything he does. I am fascinated with ideas—not the artist."

If there's inspiration, it's as basic as the senses. Cosio's intense landscapes and his equally blazing nudes are really variations of the same artistic impulse that tries to grasp or put a finger to the ecological and the organic. His is the art of naturalism. In a manner of speaking, he is one artist who is always in the nude.

Alliance Française de Manille and Galerie Astra present "Cosio Nudes" on Aug. 18-Sept. 15 at the annex gallery of Alliance Française, 2/F, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati.



"IX"



"II"

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FILINVEST
INVEST ON SOLID GROUND

Here and nowhere

By B. Carlo Tadiar
Contributor

IT WAS Paris-based Filipina artist Sandra Palomar who mapped this article, based on three cultural events of the past year. Though she lives halfway across the globe, she puts out a quarterly here to the exhibits of galleries and museums in Metro Manila. The guide is a single-leaf publication with maps locating the venues. At the same time that she was launching her guide/map, two major exhibits were mounted revolving around maps.

The first was "Projections," a thoughtful presentation of rare, antique maps of the Philippines at the Lopez Museum. The second was an unfortunate retrospective on Daniel Burnham's dawn-of-the-century plans for the development of Manila at the Metropolitan Museum.

"Projections" curator Yeyey Cruz notes a primary impulse of mapmakers is "to put one's locality in the center, an affirmation of self." Depending on their vintage, standard global maps of yore have centered on either Europe or the United States. (I think the current politically correct solution has been to put an ocean in the middle. That way no one gets offended.) The Lopez Museum collection is, almost needless to say, focused on the Philippines, from the earliest drawings in which this place we call home is but a nebulous and awkward fetus, almost grotesque in its rudimentariness.

Yeyey says she avoided chronology in her exhibition of the maps, but a sense of evolution is simply inescapable.

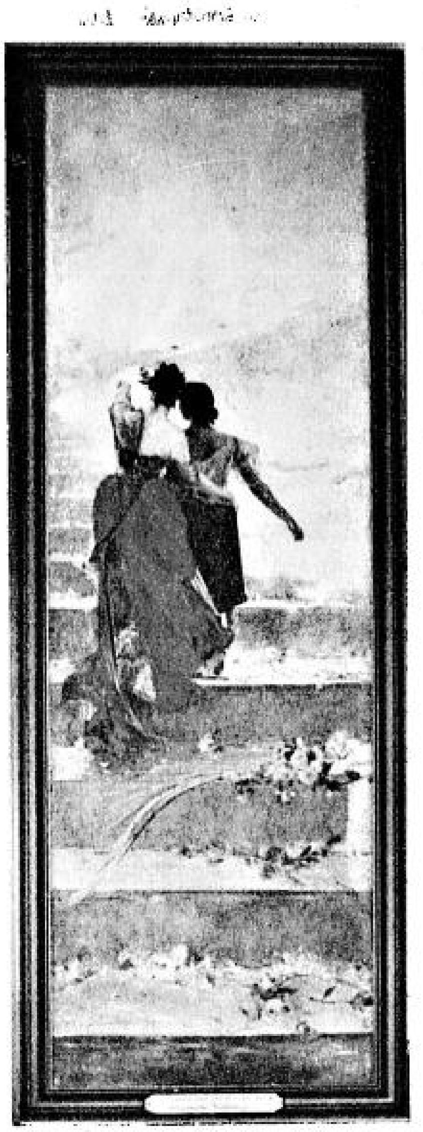
She reports that visitors tend to look for their hometown in the diversely varied maps of the Philippines, again affirming the self.

The Lopez antique map collection is itself built on the desire for self-affirmation. It is a Third World, postcolonial elite's scrapbook of mentions of their locality by the imperial West. Yet there is a deliberately reflexive gaze going on here. The collection puts the observer in the place of the observed. In this context, it is the colonizing West that is put under anthropological scrutiny, that itself becomes an ethnicity and a locality rather than a universalized perspective. All their superstitions get drawn.

Yeyey's presentation brings to the fore the shakability of what is sold as fact in mapmaking. The historical perspective afforded by the exhibit highlights the constant incompleteness of knowledge—or more accurately, the extreme particularity of knowledge to a place and time. On the one hand, the maps gathered here can be read as a growingly more correct comprehension of these islands. On the other, the gathering suggests that the map, i.e., any map, is, in the whole sense of the word, a fiction, a kind of truth, a kind of lie.

Highlights

The suggestion is made through the juxtaposition of art with the maps, which, to begin with, highlights the aesthetic quality of the latter, especially the antique ones, with all their charming drawings and beautiful calligraphy. There are echoes too between paintings and maps, like Alfonso Ossorio's "Faineants" (1945), an idyll of monsters, and nearby ancient maps teeming with the creatures that filled sailors' nightmares. Yeyey points out that mapmaking inevitably skirts with the unknown, the edge of the earth, the lair of demons.


"ESPAÑA y Filipinas" by Juan Luna

A sense of the void is also reiterated in a series of maps of oceans-charts dwelling on a vast emptiness intermittently margined by coastlines. Displayed together they achieve a poetry of the blank, of the gap, of distance, lostness and also longing. Themes like these are echoed in Roberto Chabet's "Four Directions" (1999), a quartet of canvases filled with swirling paint, each one centering a harmonica. The polyptych (an artwork made up of more than one panel) alludes to the mythic square into which the world has been divided (the four corners of the earth), and the winds of North, South, East and West which has filled fables.

Artist Dormafe Baluyos' "Pulse" (1999), a gathering of a seismogram, bound charts and video, is a virtual send-up of the map. Baluyos joined a team of seismologists studying a volcano and rendered her own map of the site by training a video camera on the ground and taping the terrain as she walked over it. The artwork replays this "map" of the mountain on a video monitor; it's a geographical representation that unfolds in time, rather than on a two-dimensional surface, and that's also jarringly blurry, choppy and dizzying. The video is accompanied by a collection of seismographic charts of the location and by an actual seismogram displaying the earth's infinitesimal movement, its unstoppable evolution, at the very point where these things are on display. This absurd-ization of mapmaking reflects how abstractive cartography is and how reductive it is, how infinite any place is in relation to its representation.

There is also Lena Cobangbang's "AAIMLN" (2002), a collection of feverish, map-like abstractions in pencil on tracing paper. The collection is presented in the form of a book, like an atlas, bound between ponderous copper covers. Yeyey says that as visitors leaf through the drawings, the pencil comes away with their fingers, slowly erasing these already hazy "maps." It reminds us of the frailty of knowledge, its susceptibility to obliteration, at the same time that it evokes a sense of the feebleness of knowing, its never-sureness.

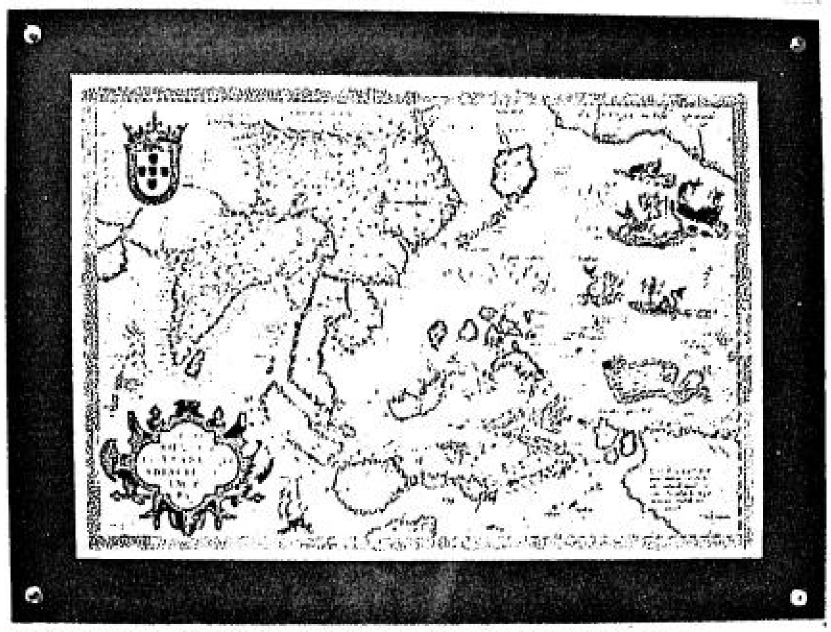
> Maps are a form of fiction. And Daniel Burnham's City Beautiful has not been implemented because it's a colonial fiction and does not work

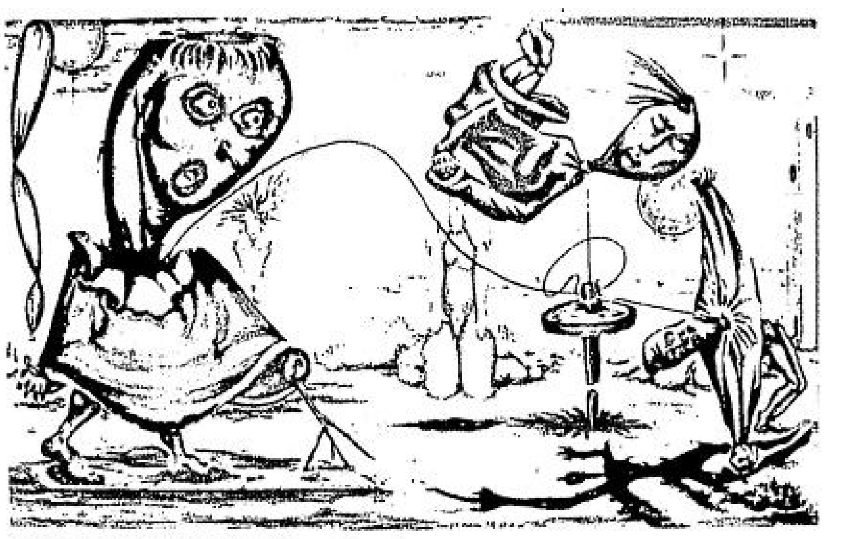
Some of the most affecting maps in this collection are not the precious ancient ones, but the maps produced by the American military during the last world war. They have an expansiveness of proportion and a very strict palette of girlish pastels; it's a show of scientific-ness, of detachment and objectivity. It's a vision of the world in which nothing really bad ever happens and everything can be fixed.

The scariest map is a machine. It is a search engine into which you can type any address and it will not only locate it for you, it will profile the humans in that location. Yikes. The search engine uses the vast information accessible to billing operations of utility companies to create a map of the Philippines as an aggregate of consumers. Juxtaposed against the ancient maps with all their amphibian monsters, this map reiterates how all maps are informed by fear and desire, and how those fundamental drives are structured by history. Bayanmap is mapmaking at is most cutting edge because it is driven by the totally contemporary desire for infinite consumption and the very real fright of not turning in a profit.

Bitterest point

Perhaps the bitterest point in the exhibition is in a famous part of the permanent Lopez collection, Juan Luna's 1886 "España y Filipinas," a fine if sad Filipino take on that gorgeous 19th-century genre of painting, the allegory. A robust white woman in Hellenistic couture leads an *india* in *baro't saya* up a staircase towards some white heaven. Of course we know that relationship was never so amicable and, at the time of the painting, on the verge of a violent collapse. And so, if we are to follow the allegory, the staircase leads to nowhere, the opacity of the sky in the picture therefore highly appropriate. When the pair reaches the top, they will plummet... to The End. If there were a next frame, Filipinas would find herself, exasperatingly, like Sisyphus, back at the bottom of the staircase, but in the arms of another patronizing white woman, this one named America.


ANCIENT European map of Asia showing the Pacific and Indian oceans


"FAINEANTS" (1945) by Alfonso Ossorio

In a sense, this next frame is the subject of the Metropolitan Museum exhibit on Daniel Burnham. As you know, the guy after whom the park in Baguio is named was, at the turn of the century, probably the most famous architect in America. He was commissioned by the US to design the capital of its newest acquisition, the Philippines, a country it unjustly established sovereignty over through war and subterfuge.

The trouble with the Burnham exhibit is that it (dis)ingenuously skirts the political, racial, economic and—most egregiously—the cultural aspects of its subject, the American design for (one could also say "on") Manila. The plan was to forge in Manila the City Beautiful. This was the name of the movement which Burnham was a leading light of. Like Paris, Manila was to have a grandiose civic center, with imperial neo-classic buildings, from which would emanate grand, tree-lined boulevards. The core of this plan was executed and stands today as familiar landmarks: the Agriculture and Finance building at one end of Luneta Park, the Legislative Building, the Manila City Hall and the Post Office.

The exhibit is a eulogy over the unfulfillment of the plan. The Manila we live in is such a catastrophe that the exhibition notes barely need even rue. By simply presenting the dream of Daniel, the viewer is swayed by the loss of those tree-lined avenues, that civic center.

It seems but natural to mourn that loss. What is forgotten is that the plan was an imperial imposition, an invasion of space by one people over another. And the aesthetic of the plan reflects that imperialism precisely, with its hauteur, its deployment of European forms (themselves appropriations of ancient Greek and Roman forms), its authoritarianism.

I'm not saying it's inherently bad architecture just because it was brought over by colonialists, I am pointing out the gloss over that colonization and the expectable constitutivity of the plan in conquest. The worst moment in the exhibit occurs in a picture of a fortress wall against which is leaned a thatch shanty. Caption reads: "Even then squatters were a problem!" *Utang na loob!* Who exactly is the squatter? Those in the massive stone fort or the indio in the lean-to?

This is the affliction the exhibit suffers. It so seamlessy identifies (and I use the term in its precise psychoanalytic sense) with the colonizer that it fails to see the radical Otherness of the local and the specificity of entirely disparate moments in history. Like so much of the production of the Filipino culture establishment, it is rapt in the fetish of the colonial, strangely blind to the inherent violence of that state.

The regret over the failure of the plan necessarily begs the question of the cause of the failure. And the implication is that we failed to stick to the plan. The text omits explaining whether that failure was the result of certain people making the wrong decisions or because of some kind of inherent retardation on our part, though the latter surmise has the upper hand.

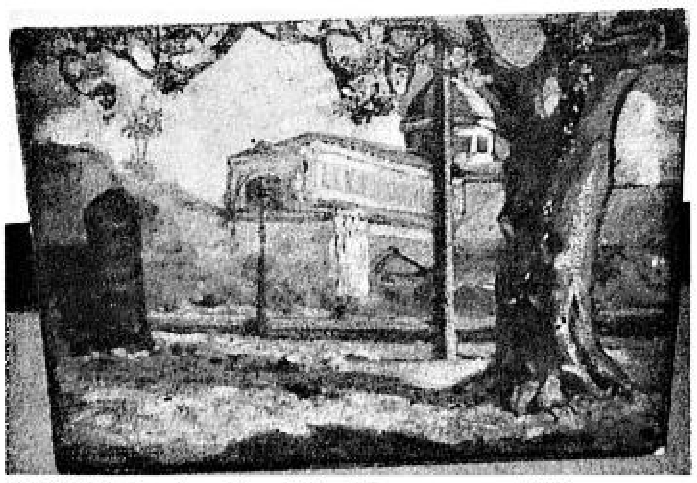
The exhibition notes that the ideal of the City Beautiful with its radiant plan centering on a civic complex was attempted two more times, in what was once an elliptical circle around the Quezon monument when the capital of the republic was moved, and, again unsuccessfully, in the Batasang Pambansa complex in Novaliches.

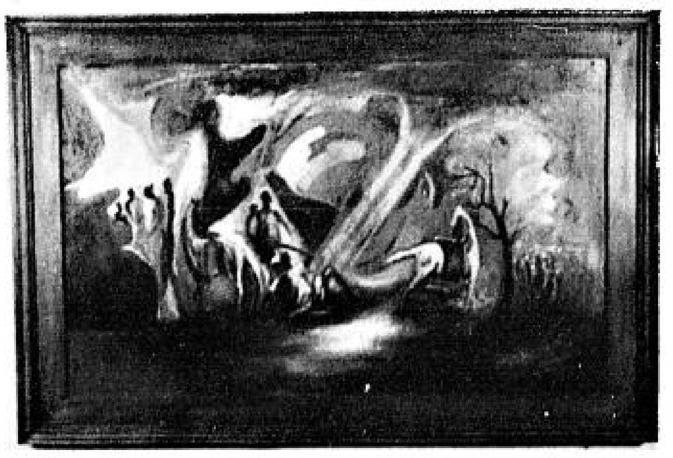
I want to say: Honey, don't you get it? It just doesn't work. Get over it. There is a fundamental collision in this enterprise of this... thing. It's called culture, a useful (if sometimes slippery) concept. I recommend it to you.

To be concluded

Mainstreaming the works of the masters

Tina Arceo-Dumlao


"OLD STO. Domingo Church," by T. Buenaventura, 1937


"TAMED HORSES," by Onib Olmedo, 1974

TO appreciate the work of the masters, one must usually take a trip down to a musty museum.

Not if Artistree, an art gallery at the 5/L of the Shangri-La Plaza mall, can help it.

Artistree chief Vic Salta says that the eight-year-old gallery has decided to concentrate on showcasing the art of the masters, to bring these closer to the hearts and minds of the Filipinos.

"We want to raise the public's appreciation of art, make the masterpieces more accessible to the public," Salta says.

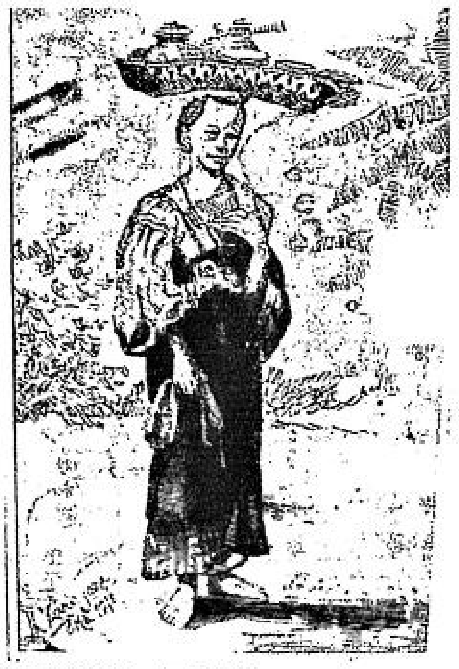
He says it is Artistree's small contribution to helping Filipinos appreciate the genius of Filipino artists.

It is unfortunate that Filipinos know more about the work of foreign artists such as Vincent Van Gogh, Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso, than they do about Fernando Amorsolo, Juan Luna and Carlos Francisco whose works have earned lavish accolades abroad.

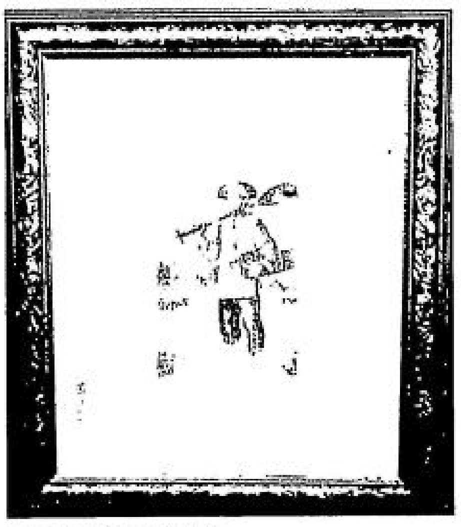
Thus, starting this month, Artistree will exhibit works of Filipino masters, including some pieces rendered at the turn of the century.

These include the works of National Artist Fernando Amorsolo, who is easily one of the most recognizable names in art circles. He is one of the first graduates of the UP School of Fine Arts, and is known as the dean of Filipino painters.

Artistree will also feature the works of his uncle, Fabian de la Rosa, who did not leave as big a legacy as his nephew, making his work more valuable. He, along with Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo, was the leading figure in Philippine art who won critical praise from critics at the turn of the century.


"WOMAN Vendor," 1918

Other artists to be featured in the Artistree exhibits are Vicente Manansala, whose works represent the art of the 1950s; Fernando Zobel, considered one of the earliest painters to draw inspiration from Filipino motifs; National Artist Jose Joya; realist Nestor Leynes; Nena Saguil, whose works are in the Museum of Modern Art and the National Center for Contemporary Art in Paris; figurative expressionist Onib Olmedo, and Miguel Zaragoza, who was one of the founders of the UP School of Fine Arts.


"FISHERMAN," 1918

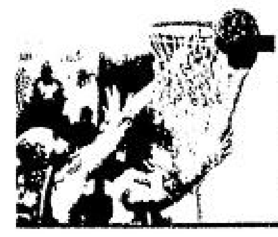
"We want these works to be the permanent fixtures of the Artistree gallery, along with the work of upcoming artists who could be masters someday," says Artistree's Serafin Pua.

Pua says there is an active trade for the works of the masters, especially the National Artists, compared to the contemporary artists. This makes these paintings or art pieces ideal investments for those looking for a place to park their idle funds.

"The value increases because each painting is unique. There can only be one. A painting bought for a million today could be worth twice or three times that amount in a few years," Salta says.

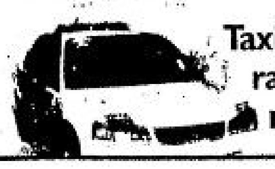
Investing in relatively cheap work of known contemporary artists is a gamble, he adds, as there is no guarantee that the works will fetch a higher value in the years ahead.

But there is no going wrong with a work of a master, Pua says.



Sports / A19
Puerto Rico ends US dominance of basketball

News / A2
2,856 Filipinos in jail in 56 countries



Metro / A15
Taxi flagdown rate up P5 next month

Across / A13
Cops rescue kidnapped Bulacan couple

Tanong ng Bayan / A3
Pambayad sa utang: Kung 'di bagong buwis, ano?
WIN A 21" TV! TEXT 2910

Carl, Clarence recovering at 'lightning' speed, says doc

CLARENCE and Carl Aguirre continued to recover at "lightning" speed, one of their doctors said yesterday.

The 2-year-old twins from Silay City in Negros Occidental, born conjoined at the head, were separated in a landmark operation two weeks ago at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center (CHAM) in New York

CARL/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Low-cost computer for poor serves as phone, TV, DVD

SANA NILAGYAN NA RIN NG OVEN PARA KOMPLETO

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif.—Raj Reddy was fed up debating the problem of the digital divide between the rich and the poor and decided to do something about it.

Reddy, a pioneering re-

LOW-COST/ A4

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₱2B lost in tax scam

Courts junk gov't cases against 22 big companies

By John Nery

IF THE failure to prosecute tax cases were an Olympic event, the Philippines may yet win its first gold medal. Documents obtained by the INQUIRER show that of 60 collection cases filed in 2001 and 2002 against those with fraudulently acquired tax credit certificates (TCCs), 15 have already been dismissed and seven more are up for dismissal.

The reason the various regional trial courts gave for dismissing the cases filed by the Bureau of Customs was essentially the same: "lack of interest to prosecute," "no effort on the part of the plaintiff to pursue the implementation" and "failure to prosecute."

These 22 cases involve a total of P1.1 billion in foregone taxes. Six other cases considered disposed were resolved under questionable circumstances. All told, these 28 cases account for over P1.3 billion in lost taxes. (That's more than half of the total amount involved in the 60 collection cases, which is P2.4 billion).

On Aug. 2, the government's losing streak

P2B LOST/ A4

IN THE KNOW

What is a tax credit?

- Like a refund, it can be used to pay future taxes, duties, charges and fees
- It is like the "credit" given to prepaid cell phone holders when they load their phones; it can be used for future calls and text messages

ROMEO GACAD/AFP

ARCHING toward victory, Jasmin Figueroa defeats—132-130—world-ranked Natalia Valeeva of Italy in their duel in the 1/32 elimination round of the women's archery individual event in the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. A tearful Figueroa shown here with her coach Henry Manalang advances to the 1/16 elimination round. She scored the biggest upset in the archery competition.

Int'l oil prices simmer to record highs

WORLD oil prices yesterday rose to fresh record highs but slid a bit as early reports of victory for Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in a referendum on his rule eased fears that unrest could upset the country's oil exports.

US light crude oil for September fell 25 cents to $46.33 a barrel on Monday (Tuesday in Manila), down from an early peak of $46.91 a barrel—the highest price level ever since the New York Mercantile Exchange launched oil futures 21 years ago. London Brent was down 43 cents at $43.45 a barrel.

Local pump prices yesterday also went up for the eighth time this year. New players Eastern Petroleum Corp., Seaoil Petroleum Corp., Unioil Group of Companies and Flying V jacked up their gasoline and diesel prices by another 35 centavos a liter.

Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc. and Total (Philippines) Corp. are expected to shortly follow suit.

The benchmark Dubai crude, on which Petron and Shell base their fuel prices, surged to a historic high of $38.90 a barrel on Friday, driving up the August average to $37.88 a barrel from only $34.65 last month.

INT'L OIL/ A4

RP archer on target, beats third best in world

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.
News Editor

ATHENS—The wild card with an innocent smile became a giant killer with nerves of steel late Sunday as a diminutive Filipina scored the biggest upset of the archery competition in the 28th Olympic Games at the Panathinaiko Stadium here.

Jasmin Figueroa needed the last of her 18 arrows to knock former world champion and two-time Olympic medalist Natalia Valeeva of Italy out of the women's individual competition.

As dramatic and emotional as it was stunning, the victory moved the dusky youth into Tuesday's Round of 32 of the match play event.

In the hallowed infield of the ancient stadium and under the shadow of the timeless Acropolis, Figueroa steeled her nerves in the face of Valeeva's comeback in the sixth and final end.

And it all came down to the final arrow. Needing seven points to complete the upset victory, she aimed and let go. As the arrow left the bow and sailed 70 meters to the target, she left everything to God. She made an eight.

"I told myself to just let go and trust the one above," she recalled.

RP ARCHER/ A18

SC: Explain how Smokey Mountain project hurt gov't

By Philip C. Tubeza and Christine O. Avendaño

SMOKEY Mountain, a symbol of poverty during the Marcos regime, got its name from the smoldering garbage dump in Tondo, Manila, where scavengers lived and collected scraps for a living.

It was leveled and converted into a residential and commercial site during the Ramos administration. But the dark smoke of corruption rises again, hovering over the multibillion-peso conversion and reclamation project.

Responding to a petition that it issue a temporary restraining order against the project while it was deliberating the case, the Supreme Court yesterday ordered the Office of the Solicitor General, the National Housing Authority and businessman Reghis Romero II to explain the allegations that the project was grossly disadvantageous to the government.

Lawyer Francisco Chavez asked the tribunal on Aug. 5 to void the joint venture agreement (JVA) between the NHA and Romero's R-II Builders Inc. because it allowed a private corporation to reclaim and own at least 79 hectares of foreshore and submerged

SC: EXPLAIN/ A4

WHAT WENT BEFORE

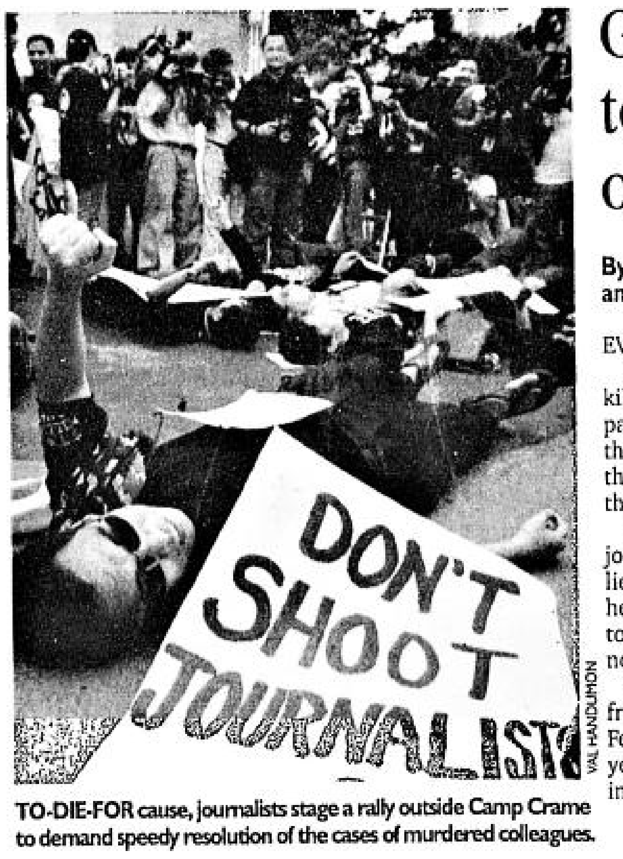
IN 1992, President Ramos authorized the National Housing Authority to go into a joint venture agreement with Reghis Romero's R-II Builders to convert the Smokey Mountain garbage dump into a housing and reclamation project.

On Aug. 11, Sen. Miriam Santiago revealed that:

- Per agreement, R-II Builders can own 79 hectares of reclaimed land if it spends for the entire project.
- R-II was given additional rights to 150 hectares of reclaimed land.
- Gov't grants 10 hectares of reclaimed land to Romero-owned Harbour Centre Port Terminals Inc.; in exchange, gov't gets 60 percent in voting shares. But through "anomalous methods," Romero ended up with the majority voting shares.

A scam, Santiago says because:

- NHA has no authority to reclaim public lands.
- Gov't actually spent for the project by giving R-II some P3.1-billion in financing.
- No compliance to transform reclaimed land to alienable land.
- No law passed to provide transfer of public lands to private entity.



VAL HANDUMON

TO-DIE-FOR cause, journalists stage a rally outside Camp Crame to demand speedy resolution of the cases of murdered colleagues.

GMA ups bounty to ₱3M for info on media killers

By Juliet Labog-Javellana
and Christian V. Esguerra

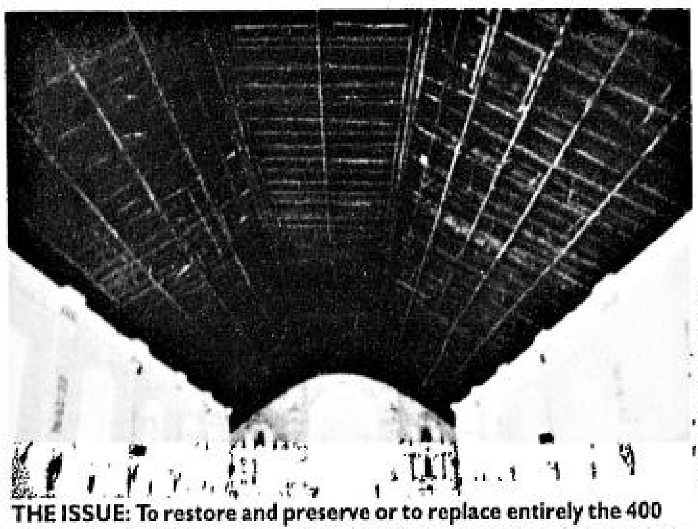
EVEN Malacañang has had enough.

Alarmed by the mounting toll of journalists killed by unknown assassins, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday boosted to P3 million the total bounty for information leading to the arrest of the killers by adding P1 million to the reward fund.

The Palace announced the offer as scores of journalists, many wearing black, staged rallies in front of Philippine National Police headquarters at Camp Crame, in General Santos City and elsewhere in the country to denounce the murders.

Ms Arroyo made the offer as relatives and friends of slain Radio Veritas correspondent Fernando Consignado prepared to bury him yesterday at the Garden of Angels Cemetery in Victoria, Laguna.

GMA UPS/ A6



THE ISSUE: To restore and preserve or to replace entirely the 400 trusses made of hardwood from the early 17th century that support the roof of the Laoag Cathedral.

Replace old wood with steel, bishop insists

By Cristina Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

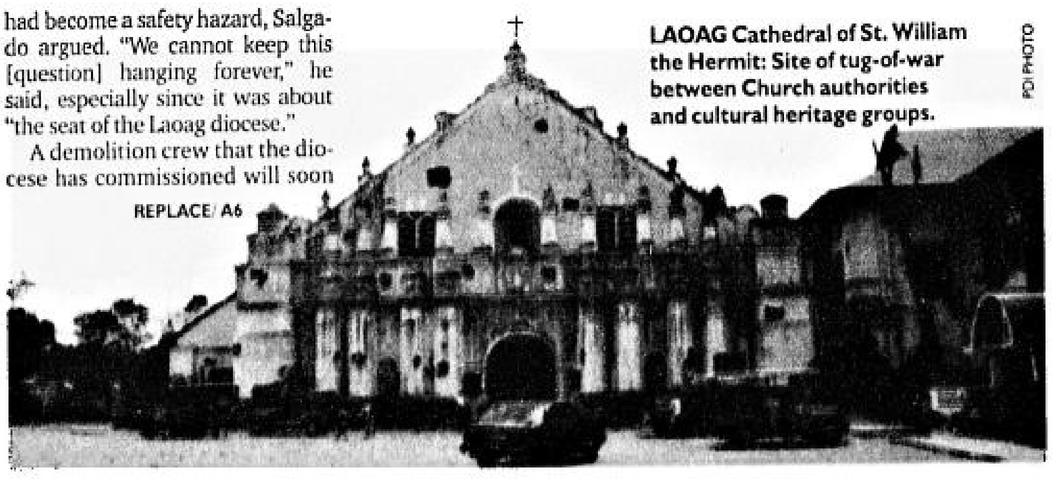
LAOAG CITY—There is no stopping the diocese from conducting a major repair of the centuries-old Laoag Cathedral, also known as Parish Church of St. William the Hermit.

Bishop Ernesto Salgado said he would take the blame "squarely" for the decision to replace with steel trusses the church's wooden support. A group pushing for the preservation of the original braces insists that tearing these down would do more harm than good.

But the timber was rotting and had become a safety hazard, Salgado argued. "We cannot keep this [question] hanging forever," he said, especially since it was about "the seat of the Laoag diocese."

A demolition crew that the diocese has commissioned will soon

REPLACE/ A6



LAOAG Cathedral of St. William the Hermit: Site of tug-of-war between Church authorities and cultural heritage groups.

PDI PHOTO

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread over the western sections.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/08/17/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

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2,856 Filipinos in jail in 56 states

They include 673 women, 50 minors, according to DFA report to Congress

By Cynthia D. Balana

LAST year, at least 2,856 Filipinos were languishing in jails spread over 56 countries for various crimes, the Department of Foreign Affairs said in its report to the House of Representatives.

To repatriate them, the government would need 20 Boeing 737 planes, according to Rep. Jose Miguel Zubiri (Lakas, 3rd district, Bukidnon).

Zubiri, who read the 369-page DFA report, said all the minors were imprisoned in Saudi Arabia.

He said the Semi-Annual Report of Foreign Service Posts on Assistance to Nationals covered the first half of 2003 but was made available to legislators only last week.

Of those in jail, 673 were women and 50 were minors. Zubiri said the number of detained Filipinos may not include the Prisoner-Overseas Filipino Worker (POFW) phenomenon.

"There are more POFWs than officially listed. Some of our foreign service posts were not able to submit their reports for a variety of reasons," he said.

Zubiri cited the case of Taiwan, which hosted 110,000 documented Filipinos last year. However, the DFA's de facto embassy there did not report a single Filipino detained.

The Philippine consulate in Tokyo, which reported 37 detained Filipinos, clarified that its report did not include the average 50 Filipinos arrested every month for immigration offenses.

Saudi Arabia topped the list of countries with the most number of detained OFWs with 1,115; followed by Malaysia with 390; the United States with 233; and Singapore with 174.

Zubiri said that Filipinos were scattered in jails all over the world, from the Doula prison in Cameroon where two Filipinos were detained, to Quito, Ecuador, where a 47-year-old Filipino was serving time for drug trafficking.

During the time the DFA report was made, five Filipinos were also doing prison time in Greece; six in Cuba; and seven in three Scandinavian countries of Sweden, Norway and Denmark.

"Even in tiny Maldives in the middle of the Indian Ocean, there was a Pinoy in prison. Up in the Andes, three Filipino women were detained for drug trafficking in Colombia," Zubiri said.

The POFWs were detained for all the offenses one can find in the Penal Code—from rape to robbery, from drug use to forgery of credit cards.

Majority, however, ended up in prison for immigration offenses and work contract violations.

There were also cases of Filipino women who ran away from employers who maltreated them, including many who were the subject of trumped-up charges, courtesy of bosses who treat them as properties, not human beings.

Zubiri said the growing rise of POFWs should prod the government to increase the budget of consulates and embassies to assist nationals.

"Those who are in the front lines should be allowed to retain a bigger percentage of earnings generated from consular transactions such as the issuance of passports," he said.

HONEST FILIPINO
New York City taxi driver Nestor Ortiz Sulpico arrives at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Monday to receive an award from the Department of Tourism. Sulpico returned a bag containing $70,000 worth of jewelry left by a passenger inside his cab. ROGER MARGALLO

Raid on kidnappers' lair bolsters peace talks

By Alcuin Papa

UPCOMING peace talks between the government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Froht will be bolstered by the rebels' collaboration in a military operation that resulted in the death of a notorious kidnap gang leader.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu yesterday said the air strike which killed Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom leader Tahir Alonto in Liguasan Marsh in Maguindanao last Friday was "a positive development and would help the talks one way or the other."

Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita confirmed that the MILF's role in the military operations against the Pentagon group would be a big boost to the peace talks. The attack on Liguasan Marsh, an area heavily controlled by the MILF, was coordinated by the military with the MILF's Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities.

According to Ermita, a new round of Malaysian-brokered talks would be held in Kuala Lumpur sometime next week.

Kabalu said the talks were expected to last a day or two. "It's not impossible for a final peace accord to be signed before the year's end," he said.

Helicopters from the Philippine Air Force and ground forces from the 6th Infantry Division attacked an area in the Liguasan Marsh in Sultan Kudarat Pendatun town last Friday where Alonto was said to have been hiding. The military said Alonto was killed together with 15 of his men.

Yesterday, PAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla showed media a video footage of the attack.

"This video proves that he died. We hope speculations that Alonto is still alive would also die down," he said. *With AP*

Erap wants plunder trial live on TV

By Armand N. Nocum

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada has changed his mind and would now allow his plunder trial to be televised.

Estrada yesterday filed with the Supreme Court a motion withdrawing his objection to "live coverage of his trial in the Sandiganbayan."

But even as he was for opening his trial to the public, he still failed to present witnesses in his defense at yesterday's hearing, forcing the Sandiganbayan Special Division to reset the presentation of evidence to Sept. 6.

When the court first reset the hearing to Aug. 18, Estrada lawyer Jose Flaminiano threatened to resign from the case, saying his schedule was too tight to appear again so soon. This prompted the court to settle for Sept. 6 for the next hearing.

If by that time Estrada's lawyers still failed to present evidence, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said he would ask the court to consider the plunder and perjury cases against Estrada as having been submitted for resolution.

"I'll move to have their right to present evidence as having been waived and ask for a decision in the cases," Villa-Ignacio said, stressing that there should be an end to the delaying tactics of the defense lawyers who were originally scheduled to start presenting their evidence in May last year.

Estrada had earlier objected to live coverage of his trial, saying that it was his right to refuse.

But hours after yesterday's hearing, Flaminiano submitted a motion to the Supreme Court asking that his client be given a "chance to present his side of the story to our people."

"In the impeachment trial, and in the media, his side had never really been heard," Flaminiano's four-page motion said.

And since the "high feelings of 2001 have gone down" and since he had been "tried and convicted by publicity," it is now Estrada's turn to be heard, the motion said.

In a related development, in a telephone interview from his rest house detention in Tanay, Rizal, Estrada said he was mulling asking the Sandiganbayan to allow him to bring back his original set of defense lawyers led by former Sen. Rene Saguisag. *With an AFP report*

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	2/Trial & Pre-trial Skills	Justice Noel G. Tijam
☐ Aug. 21 p.m.	3/Legal Ethics	Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
	2/MCLE Prescribed: Environmental Law	Justice Oswaldo D. Agcaoili
☐ Aug. 28 a.m.	2/Legal Writing	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr.
	2/Updates in Criminal and Civil Procedure	Justice Ruben T. Reyes
☐ Aug. 28 p.m.	3/Alternative Dispute Resolution	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
	2/Updates in Remedial Law	Justice Ricardo P. Galvez
☐ Sept. 4 a.m.	2/International Law	Prof. Harry H. L. Roque, Jr.
	2/ MCLE Prescribed: Reforms in Securities Law	Chairperson Lilia R. Bautista
☐ Sept. 4 p.m.	2/Trial & Pre-trial Skills	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval
	3/Legal Ethics	Justice Hector L. Hofileña
☐ Sept.11 a.m.	2/MCLE Prescribed: Technology & the Law	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy
	2/Updates in Criminal Law	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta
☐ Sept. 11 p.m.	2/Oral Advocacy	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon
	3/Updates in Constitutional Law	Justice Regalado E. Maambong

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'All I want for my birthday is my papa'

By Alcuin Papa

TWO-YEAR-OLD Alliyah Nicole Fidelino has yet to speak in complete sentences, but the placard she held for media to see contained what was probably in her little heart.

"All I want for my birthday is my papa. I miss my papa," the placard read.

The daughter of Lt. Ronaldo Fidelino celebrated her second birthday yesterday in their modest home in Fort Bonifacio. When asked by reporters what she wanted for her birthday, the child answered: "Papa, papa."

Leah, Fidelino's wife, said her daughter was sad, restless and missing her father, who is still held captive by the New People's Army since his capture on March 1 in Tinambac, Camarines Sur.

"She is sad because her papa is not here. When I ask her what she wants for her birthday, she always says 'Papa,'" Leah told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

Alliyah, in a sky blue outfit, looked like she was enjoying herself. She even blew out the candles on her birthday cake. There are times, however, when she would have tantrums and crying fits.

Leah explained: "She (Alliyah) has become impatient and tired because she misses her father."

Leah, who is six months pregnant, expressed fears that complications might accompany her second pregnancy. Her baby could be born with hydrocephalus, or fluid in the brain, her doctors had warned, because of the stress of the past few months. Nevertheless, she hopes and prays her baby will be fine.

She busies herself with preparing the clothes her husband would wear once released by the NPA. Leah has also volunteered to prepare the outfit of the other captured soldier, Pfc. Ronel Nemeno, because his family in Mindanao would not be able to come to Manila and Bicol.

The NPA said the two prisoners would be released any time this week. The government has called for a suspension of military and police operations in the area as demanded by the NPA to facilitate the release of the two soldiers.

"I hope their captors would keep their word and release my husband. I wouldn't know what to do if there is a postponement or cancellation of the release," Leah said.

NEWSBRIEFS

19 RP fishermen rescued

HANOI—Nineteen Filipino fishermen were rescued by a Vietnamese cargo ship following a four-day ordeal at sea that left two men dead, officials said Monday. Their vessel, the Lucky Three, sunk in rough seas on Aug. 8 and the crew were left clinging to debris as they drifted helplessly in the South China Sea. Two of the 21-member crew died of cold and hunger. The remaining 19 fishermen were spotted on Aug. 11 by a vessel travelling from the Philippines. It picked them up and took them to Vietnam's central port city of Quy Nhon where they were given medical treatment. Fourteen crew members were formally handed over Monday in Quy Nhon to Philippine Embassy officials, said Bui Quoc Hong, deputy head of the People's Committee Office of Binh Dinh province. Five others remained in hospital and were expected to be discharged in the coming days, he added. ***AFP***

Angie does a Ping

INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes has recycled an old campaign of Sen. Panfilo Lacson by going after police officers using stolen vehicles. Reyes gave policemen based in Camp Crame from 10 a.m. to 12 noon yesterday to turn over these "hot cars" to the Traffic Management Group. Those based in other police units in the country were given until 10 a.m. today to surrender stolen vehicles they are using either for police operations or for personal reasons. "It's unfair for owners of stolen vehicles for law enforcers to recover and the vehicles use them as if they're their own," Reyes told reporters in a press conference. Asked why he suddenly launched the drive, Reyes appeared irked and replied: "Because it's the right thing to do." The campaign is an apparent rehash of what Lacson did in 2000 when he was chief of the Philippine National Police chief. ***Christian V. Esguerra***

2 more kidnap suspects

TWO MORE suspects in the Betti Chua Sy kidnap-murder were arrested, bringing to 14 the total number of arrested gang members allegedly behind the abduction of the Coca-Cola executive. The National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force arrested Fidel "Junjun" Superable Jr. on July 27 at Samonte Park on Zamora Street, Cavite, and Jose "Bimbo" Artoza the following day at the MIA Village in Tandang Sora, Quezon City. Superable and Artoza were presented to reporters in Camp Crame yesterday. Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes said Artoza wrapped Sy's body in a blanket hours after her captors accidentally shot her in Quezon City in November last year. Her body was found in Parañaque City the following morning. Superable was allegedly involved in planning the abduction. ***Christian V. Esguerra***

Country warned of water crisis over SC ruling

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE COUNTRY would suffer a water crisis if the Supreme Court does not reverse its ruling declaring Local Water Districts (LWDs) to be government-owned or controlled corporations, an engineer told the court.

In a 15-page urgent motion for reexamination, engineer Ranulfo C. Feliciano, general manager of the Leyte Metropolitan Water District in Tacloban City, said the high court's decision which was handed down in January would lead to water rates shooting up all over the country.

"Removing the private character of [LWDs] would result in a nationwide water crisis and would create social unrest on a scale never seen before," Feliciano said.

The Supreme Court had ruled that LWDs were government-owned entities since Presidential Decree 198 created them. It said that to declare them private corporations would violate certain provisions of the Constitution.

Feliciano, however, warned that the consuming public would be made to suffer if the decision was not set aside.

He said declaring LWDs government-controlled corporations removed their tax exemption and the other tax incentives they enjoyed.

Worse, they were now required to remit at least 50 percent of their net earnings to the national government, he said.

"As a matter of survival, LWDs would be constrained to pass on to their consumers all the taxes, fees and other charges, including the 50 percent remittance to the national treasury," Feliciano said. "The inevitable result would be [an] increase in the cost of water."

Feliciano said the LWDs would also lose their flexibility in dealing with emergencies and would be more "vulnerable to political interference" once their private character is lost.

Feliciano said PD 198 was a general law that merely authorized the formation of LWDs, it did not create them.

"By its mere enactment or promulgation, no local water district came into being. LWDs came into existence on a voluntary basis, depending on the desire and will of the residents of a given community," he said.

He said a water district is created with the filing of a resolution of formation which is then passed by the local municipal, city or provincial councils.

'Lawin' heads for Taiwan

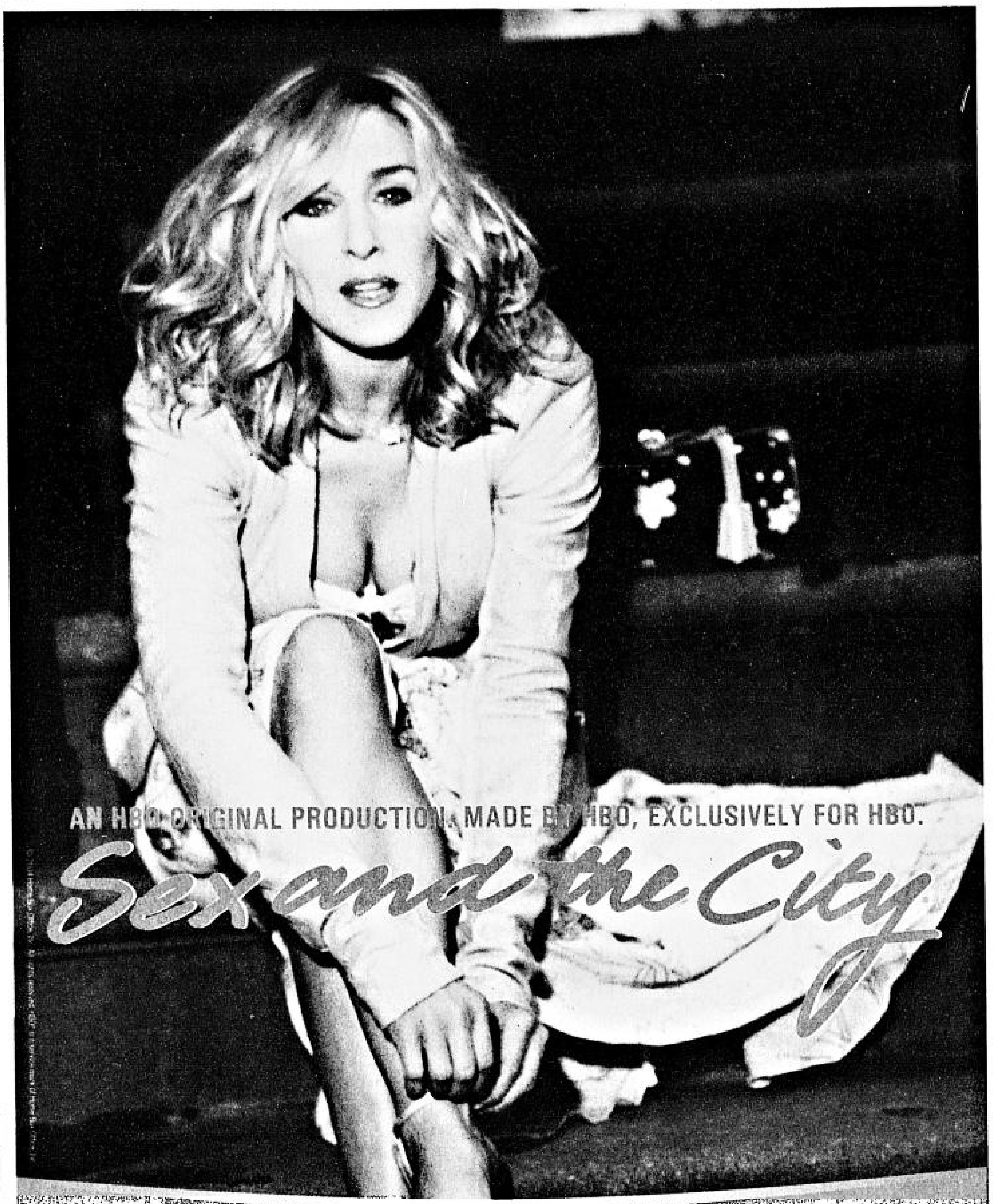
TROPICAL depression Lawin veered toward Taiwan yesterday but is still mainly to blame for the monsoon rains expected today.

The weather bureau said Lawin, initially charted to hit northern Luzon, changed direction Monday morning. As of 2 p.m., its center was estimated 940 kilometers east southeast of Basco, Batanes.

Lawin will be enhancing the southwest monsoon over the western sections of the archipelago.

Volt Contreras

Tanong ng Bayan
INQ TV
ABC Tuwing Huwebes, 8pm
I-text ang inyong "fearless view" sa 2910. Pipiliin namin ang pinakamagaling na sagot. Ang premyo linggo-linggo: Isang 21" color TV set!
I-type: INQTV <ang inyong sagot>, <buong pangalan>, <siyudad o probinsiya>, tapos ipadala sa 2910. Cut-off time: WEDNESDAY, 6 PM. Winner will be identified during the InqTV program: Thursday, 8pm, on ABC.
text 2910 NEW NUMBER
Pambayad sa utang: Kung 'di bagong buwis, ano?
Narito ang ilan sa inyong mga sagot. Text na!
"Linisin muna bir bago mangolekta s bayan, at least d n mkukupitan pamahalaan,pmayad n un s utang!"
Paul Jumamil (Sorsogon City)
"Di dapt new tax kc new sourc of corruption. dapat mangolekta ng mahusay. mgbigay ng incentive sa makapag2ro ng tax evaders."
Arturo Pantaleon (Valenzuela)



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Shell's legal victory

By John Nery

ON AUG. 2, the Court of Tax Appeals canceled an "assessment for deficiency excise taxes" amounting to P684 million that the Bureau of Internal Revenue had imposed on Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.

The assessment stemmed from Shell's use of defective Tax Credit Certificates. Shell, which had sought the judgment, denied committing fraud.

The decision, written by Associate Justice Lovell Bautista and concurred with by Presiding Justice Ernesto Acosta, agreed with Shell. The dispositive portion read, in part: "We rule that fraud has to be proved in this case because except for the assessment for taxable year 1997, all the years involved already prescribed ... Without clear and convincing evidence showing actual fraud, the assessment must fail."

But in his dissenting opinion, Associate Justice Juanito Castañeda Jr. asserted that the evidence did, in fact, point to fraud. "... (I)t cannot be denied that in the case at bar, circumstances abound indicating fraud, both in the issuance of the tax credit certificates and their subsequent transfer to petitioner."

Castañeda noted that the One-Stop Shop center "had in its possession duly notarized Sales Agreements as well as Deeds of Assignments executed by and between petitioner [Shell] and various textile mills [the original grantees of the TCCs which then sold them to Shell].

₱2B lost in tax credit scam

From page A1

continued when the Court of Tax Appeals threw out a P684-million tax assessment that the Bureau of Internal Revenue had levied on oil giant Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. for the use of fraudulently secured TCCs *(See sidebar on this page.)*. This latest decision brought the total estimate of unrecoverable tax claims to just under P2 billion.

The string of losses also put additional pressure on Special Presidential Task Force 156, the inter-agency unit Malacañang set up in 1999, to prosecute TCC fraud cases. The task force has often been at odds with the One Stop Shop (the Department of Finance's tax credit facility) over the conduct of the tax credit scam investigations.

Dismissed cases

Informed sources said the BOC's cases had been dismissed against the following companies: Nikko Textile Mills, Express Color Industries, Fiber Technology, Kultura Knittex (2), Integrated Multi Cotton Mills, Master Color System, Texasia, Manila Bay Spinning Mills, FLB International Fiber, Filsyn, Solid Mills, AR Packaging and Pilipinas Shell (2).

The INQUIRER obtained copies of the dismissal orders for 11 of the 15 cases.

The July 15, 2003 decision of Judge Cesar Solis of the Manila Regional Trial Court, in the BOC case against AR Packaging, captured the tone and phrasing of the other dismissal orders.

"The records of this case do not show appropriate action taken by plaintiff's counsel to prosecute this case which was filed way back Jan. 8, 2003. Wherefore, for lack of interest to prosecute for an unreasonable length of time, let this case be dismissed accordingly," Solis said.

In some instances, a court had already granted the government's motion for a writ of preliminary attachment. For instance, in the case against Fiber Technology, the dismissal order (issued on Jan. 23, 2004) noted that "Said order was received by plaintiff on Feb. 11, 2003. Despite receipt thereof, there has been no effort on the part of the plaintiff to pursue the implementation thereof."

Scheduled for dismissal

The most recent case dismissed was that against Nikko—the order came out on June 28. The biggest cases, in terms of amounts involved, were one against Shell (for P197 million) and another against Integrated Multi Cotton (for P147 million).

Sources also said seven cases were already scheduled for dismissal: Circular Knitting, Isuzu Phil., a second one against Filsyn, Steel Asia, Tung Cheng Textile, First Unity Textile and Diamond Knitting. Of the seven, the Filsyn case was the biggest, at P156 million.

Six of the 22 cases dismissed or up for dismissal involved companies owned by Faustino Chingkoe, the alleged principal behind the tax credit scam, which at last count had defrauded the government of some P5.3 billion.

Five collection cases were ordered settled under questionable circumstances. One, a second case filed against Steel Asia, this time for P37 million, was "settled 100 percent," but the penalty and other charges were waived. Four were deemed settled when the court ordered the companies to pay a settlement fee equivalent to 20 percent of the amount claimed.

The INQUIRER also obtained a copy of a memo Deputy Customs Commissioner Gil Valera sent to Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer, alternate chair of the Special Task Force.

Valera began his June 15 memo by recalling one of his initial "advocacies."

He wrote: "When I became Deputy Commissioner of Customs in charge of the Revenue Collection Monitoring Group last Aug. 7, 2001 [sic], immediately one of my advocacies was to pursue civil recovery effort by filing and prosecuting civil collection cases against those involved in the tax credit scam that happened in 1994 to 1998 in the One Stop Shop Inter Agency Tax Credit and Duty Drawback Center of the Department of Finance."

By his own standards, Valera may be said to have dramatically underperformed.

No victory for gov't

His own memo, written in response to Ferrer's June 8 request for an update, did not show any unambiguous victory for the government. It listed the status of 42 pending civil cases; only two cases (against Steniel Cavite Packaging and Metro Paper and Packaging) ended with a court order mandating payment. But the amounts the two companies had to pay represented only 20 percent of their liabilities.

The memo also listed two pieces of real estate the BOC "attached" as part of its collection effort. The personal property detailed were owned by two different stockholders of grantee companies implicated in the tax credit fraud.

One is of particular interest. "We were able to pierce the veil of corporate secrecy and attach the personal property of one of the stockholders [of Diamond Knitting]—Faustino Chingkoe. The attached house and lot is located at the Corinthian Gardens subdivision and is worth at least P20 million."

Perhaps unknown to Varela or the Special Task Force itself, the same property had already been sold to W.P. Holdings Corp. eight months before, on Oct. 8, 2003.

IN THE KNOW

Who can avail of OSS tax credits?

- Exporters and manufacturers of BOT-registered products for exports
- Who have actually paid duties and taxes on the raw materials and supplies used

Why a tax credit scam?

- When refunds were made on taxes never paid
- In the P2.5-billion tax credit scam involving the Chingkoe Group of Companies for example, a study showed that the credits were based on a combined reported sales of only P349.72 million (which means the cost of materials to manufacture products sold was at least 7 times higher than total sales)
- Tax credits were also reportedly granted even in years where some companies ceased operations

What's the alleged scam involving oil companies?

- The oil companies bought the spurious tax credit certificates and used them to pay for taxes owed. The government in effect wasn't paid at all.

SC: Explain how Smokey Mountain project hurt gov't

From page A1

lands near the former dump.

He said this was illegal as the Supreme Court had ruled in its decision on the Public Estates Authority-Amari scandal that lands of public domain could not be acquired by private corporations.

R-II Builders was supposed to acquire the land in exchange for developing the former dump into a low-cost medium-rise housing and industrial-commercial complex at its own expense.

Chavez said the private firm ran out of money for the project in 1994 and government agencies were forced to shell out more than P3.1 billion to save it.

Surprising

"Surprisingly, instead of terminating the agreement and going after R-II Builders for breach of its obligation to fully finance the development of Smokey Mountain, the government even aided R-II in financing the said project. This despite the government's publicized statement that the said project shall be implemented 'with no cost to the government,'" he said.

"Thus, the 'no cost to the government' policy was suddenly thrown out the window. In the end, it was actually the government which ended up financing the project," Chavez said.

Taking off from Chavez's accusations, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago identified yesterday the government agencies and the amount of money they had raised for the project.

SSS biggest contributor

The biggest amount came from the Social Security System, which contributed P1.039 million to the project. The agency, now faced with a financial problem, is seeking an increase in member contributions.

The other agencies that financed the Smokey Mountain reclamation project:

- Overseas Workers Welfare Administration Secretariat and its Medicare, P835 million.
- Philippine National Bank, P300 million.
- Home Guaranty Corp.'s Abot Kaya Pabahay Fund, P350 million.
- Land Bank of the Philippines, P124 million.
- HGC Provident Fund, P30 million.
- Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., P6 million.
- Other financial institutions, P473 million.

Principal suspects

In a privilege speech, Santiago also named former President Fidel Ramos among the seven "principal suspects" in the alleged scam and said the latter could be held liable for malversation of funds.

The other suspects named by Santiago were Dionisio de la Serna, who chaired the executive committee that oversaw the project; Roberto Aventajado, who succeeded De la Serna in 1999; Robert Balao, general manager of the NHA; Reghis Romero, owner of R-II Holdings and R-II Builders; Edmund Sese, president of R-II Builders and Vicente Suazo Jr., president of Harbour Centre Port Terminal.

She also named the "nominal" members of the executive committee led by former Manila mayor and now Sen. Alfredo Lim.

But she made it clear that she was "not casting any shadow" on the executive committee members because, she said, they "may not have had direct participation" in the transaction.

Criminal contract

Expanding on her "Anak ng Amari" privilege speech, which she delivered last week, Santiago took the floor to hold Ramos liable for the "unconstitutional, invalid, illegal and criminal" contract for issuing two proclamation orders that authorized R-II Builders to reclaim 79 hectares from the Manila Bay.

She referred to Ramos, whom she ran against and lost to the 1992 presidential elections, as the president of the country from 1992 to 1998 "by virtue of cheating."

Last week, Santiago said the contract signed by the Ramos administration with R-II Builders was unconstitutional because the Constitution barred the sale of reclaimed land to any private corporation.

She also said the contract should have been rescinded because R-II Builders failed to comply with the agreement to fully finance the project. Instead, government financing institutions funded it at a cost of P3 billion.

Reclaimed land can't be sold

In an interview with reporters before the Senate session began yesterday, Santiago said all seven principal suspects were criminally liable "because they were the people who pushed or approved the contract or implemented the contract."

"My thesis is very simple," she told reporters. "The Constitution says reclaimed lands cannot be sold to private corporations."

Asked what Ramos' liability was, Santiago said the former President may be liable for malversation of public funds under the Penal Code "if it can be shown that he had full knowledge and participation in the contract."

At the session, Santiago said Ramos issued Proclamation No. 39 on Sept. 9, 1992, authorizing the reclamation of the original area of 40 hectares in Manila Bay and later Proclamation No. 465 on Aug. 31, 1994, which increased the reclamation area to 79 hectares.

The former President also authorized the issuance by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to the NHA special patent titles over the Smokey Mountain area. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

Ramos, Lim back inquiry

By Fe Zamora and Michael Lim Ubac

FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos yesterday said Sen. Miriam Santiago's accusations were based on wrong information fed by people with a private agenda.

Ramos, interviewed on television, admitted he had issued two proclamations—designating the reclaimed area and authorizing the National Housing Authority to issue special patent titles for the reclaimed area, but maintained that these patents were legal.

"She should not call these 'alleged.' I admit they were issued, these are there in the record. They are matter of public knowledge ... Why doesn't she just examine the legality or I'd like to call it nobility of these issuances on the part of the president?" Ramos said.

He reiterated that he was ready to face any inquiry on the Smokey Mountain project to ferret out the truth and protect the innocent people who were just doing their jobs in implementing the plan to transform the garbage dump into a habitable community.

To clear his name, Sen. Alfredo Lim called on the Senate to support the inquiry "so that we could get to the bottom of this alleged anomaly."

Speaking in Filipino, Lim said on the Senate floor that he would resign should the inquiry prove that he had earned one centavo from the deal.

"I can look everybody in the eye. Let the ax fall where it may. I have nothing to do with the alleged anomaly. For the record ... I did not get even a centavo," said Lim, who was mayor of Manila when the project was started in 1999.

He clarified that he, along with other Metro Manila mayors, had been merely invited by Ramos to attend the meetings concerning the project, which was aimed at erasing the nation's image then as the garbage capital of Asia.

Lim said he was informed that no government funds would be used to implement the project, so he supported it.

"I hope we could fast-track this inquiry to unmask those responsible for violating the Constitution," said Lim, who wished that he and other innocent persons would not be unnecessarily dragged into the scandal.

Interviewed on ANC television, Ramos said some people were using "our very learned political leaders, especially those with investigative powers, to bring down their competitors."

International oil prices simmer to record highs

From page A1

Unleaded gasoline and diesel based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) bellwether for finished products, also jumped to highs of $52.25 and $51.29 a barrel on Friday, respectively.

August averages for MOPS-based unleaded gasoline and diesel, placed at $51.09 and $50.58 a barrel as of Aug. 13, have surpassed July averages pegged at $46.52 and $46.25 a barrel.

The Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (Ippca), an umbrella organization to which most of the new oil players belong, said that fuel prices would stay at high levels until the end of the year.

"These prices may be sustained up to the winter months. They may even be here to stay," Ippca chair Fernando Martinez said in a press briefing.

Since the start of the year, gasoline prices have risen eight times by a total of P5.05-P5.20 a liter, while diesel prices have gone up seven times by a total of P3.85-P4 a liter.

Even so, Ippca vice president Glenn Yu said that local oil firms still had under-recoveries, or increased costs that were not reflected in current pump prices.

Ippca president Ramon Villavicencio warned that the small oil players, which account for a 15-percent share of the market, could fold up if they continued to absorb increased costs.

Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion earlier accused the new oil players of overcharging.

Venezuela referendum

World prices fell after results released by Venezuelan electoral authorities with 94 percent of the vote counted showed that Chavez had survived a referendum to recall him. *(See story in The World, Page A8.)*

Energy markets have been worried about disruptions to the country's oil production of 2.6 million barrels per day (bpd) should a disputed referendum result spark social unrest. Shipping sources had said shipments from Venezuela, the world's fifth-largest crude exporter, were running smoothly.

Two pro-opposition electoral officials questioned the result of the Venezuela referendum, saying that procedural checks had not been carried out on the results as required.

"There are lots of concerns in the oil market now, like the Iraqi situation and Opec's (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) thin spare capacity, but for today the market is focusing on the Venezuela vote," said Tony Nunan, a manager at Mitsubishi Corp.'s international petroleum business.

Iraq woes

Disruption to Iraqi oil flow also hounded the market, with exports remained cut by about half to around 900,000 bpd, since the southern pipeline was attacked by saboteurs, and as a US offensive against followers of cleric Moqtada al-Sadr spread to several cities.

"The pipeline is not operating. We do not know when conditions would improve to reopen it," a South Oil Co. official said Monday.

Oil is up more than $10 a barrel since the start of the year. In real terms, adjusted for inflation, prices are still well below 1980's peak of $80, following the Iranian revolution. But current prices have surpassed those of 1974, the first oil shock, when crude averaged an inflation-adjusted $43 during the Arab oil embargo.

While leading economies have so far managed to cope with higher prices, signs are emerging that rising energy costs are starting to hurt.

Iran's Opec governor said Saturday that the Opec cartel, which accounts for around half of world oil exports, could do nothing to douse scorching prices as crude supply was already running well above demand. *Reports from Abigail L. Ho and Reuters*

Corrections

IN THE Aug. 13 issue, a Sports story on Page A27—"Warriors clip Eagles' wings"—failed to include in the box score of the UST-UP game the five points scored by UST Tiger Franciz Allera.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 16 issue, an Across the Nation story on Page A17—"Pampanga execs to probe hike in toll fees in North"—misstated the cost of the North Luzon Expressway rehabilitation project. The correct figure is $371 million, not P371 million.

* * *

IN THE Aug. 16 issue, the second to the last paragraph of the front-page story—"No sacred cows in pork probe, says Ombudsman"—should have read: "As in the P11.5-million transaction, the P15 million was reportedly not covered by an authorization and resolution from the GSP council."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address rpalabrica@inquirer.com ph.

Low-cost computer for poor serves as phone...

From page A1

searcher in artificial intelligence and professor at Carnegie Mellon University, plans to unveil at the end of this year his new project—a low-cost computer that doubles as a TV and a DVD player.

Called the PCtvt, Reddy's wirelessly networked personal computer can be controlled by a simple TV remote control and can function as a television, telephone and videophone.

Reddy plans to sell the PCtvt, which is estimated to cost only $250 (about P14,000), to the 4 billion people around the world who live on less than $2,000 a year.

Developing countries

He says his device can readily find a market in developing countries, particularly those with large populations of people who cannot read.

Reddy says he is out to prove that it is possible to bring information technology to impoverished communities without depending on philanthropy.

Microsoft and TriGem, the Korean computer maker, is backing the project that Reddy is undertaking in partnership with the Indian Institute of Science, the Indian Institute of Information Technology and researchers at the University of California, Berkeley.

Reddy believes that he will be able to use the PCtvt as a vehicle to take computing and communications to populations that until now have been excluded from the digital world.

What separates Reddy's approach from other efforts is his belief that even the world's poorest communities can become a profitable market for computers.

"I kept asking myself, 'What would the device have to do for someone on the other side of the digital divide to be desirable?'" Reddy said.

The answer, he reckoned, was a simple device that would offer entertainment, making it something that even the world's poorest citizens might be willing to pay about 10 percent of their annual income to own.

"Entertainment is the killer app (application), and that will smuggle something that is a lot more sophisticated into the home," says Tom Kalil, special assistant to the chancellor for science and technology at Berkeley.

Digital divide

Reddy hopes to begin installing the first 100 prototypes of the PCtvt in India and possibly several other countries. The New York Times

GMA men to write book on how Angelo was saved

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

IN THE back of their minds is a book they want to write someday about how they saved Angelo de la Cruz from a beheading in Iraq.

But for now, their worry is their immediate future. So anxious are they about what lies ahead that they have taken to asking each other for information about what changes in the Cabinet their boss has in mind.

As four Cabinet officials reflected on the De la Cruz hostage negotiations at a "thanksgiving lunch" yesterday, they could not help but compare notes on the impending changes in President Macapagal-Arroyo's official family.

"Toting, *ano'ng balita* (What's new)?" Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita asked the President's spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye.

Himself at a loss, Bunye returned the question: "*Ikaw, ano'ng balita* (What have you heard)?"

The exchange at the lunch was reported by Bunye to media.

"There were no announcements as of today. As a matter of fact, we had lunch with some Cabinet officials and everybody was asking one another (what will happen)," Bunye said at his press briefing.

He said this was because Ms Arroyo had already notified in advance those who would be affected by the Cabinet changes. Others who had received no specific notifications were unsure what would happen to them.

Only when GMA is gone

Bunye declined to name them or say how many would be affected by the reshuffle.

The lunch—a thanksgiving for the successful release of the Filipino driver taken hostage by militants in Iraq—was attended by Ermita, Bunye, Foreign Secretary Delia Albert, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, Foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis and others who were involved in the handling of the crisis.

Bunye said that during the lunch, which Albert hosted, they agreed that everything that transpired during the 17 suspense-filled days of the hostage crisis should be written up.

"Everybody agreed but it cannot be published until the President's term is over," Bunye said.

Not yet declassified

Bunye said there were details that could not be disclosed while Ms Arroyo was President. He did not say what those were and if the rumored payment of ransom was one of them.

"There are some details that cannot be declassified yet," he said.

Bunye said he himself was surprised upon learning those details.

"It's better (for you) to just read the book," Bunye quipped.

Bunye himself is slated to take over as press secretary in a concurrent capacity.

Rigodon

Informed sources told the INQUIRER last week that Ermita would replace Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, who is reportedly "excited" over his supposed impending appointment as new foreign secretary.

The sources said Romulo was "tired of the wheeling and dealing" in Malacañang and looked forward to moving to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The sources said Ermita would serve as the "Little President" for one year, after which presidential chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao would take over.

Ermita's replacement in the Department of National Defense could be former chief presidential legal counsel Avelino "Nonong" Cruz Jr., according to the sources.

Romulo, who headed the Cabinet crisis committee in the De la Cruz case, did not attend the luncheon and was represented by Senior Deputy Executive Secretary Jake Lagonera.

Other changes

Other changes reportedly involve former Iloilo Rep. Raul Gonzalez as justice secretary and acting Justice Secretary Merceditas Gutierrez as new chief presidential legal counsel, former Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad as new education secretary, former presidential assistant for the Visayas Rene Villa as new agrarian reform secretary, former Presidential Management Staff chief Silvestre Afable as head of the newly formed Office of the Communications Director, and Cerge Remonde as new PMS chief.

Press Secretary Milton Alingod is reportedly transferring to a government-owned corporation.

The anxiety was apparent among the Cabinet members.

"Well, as a member of the Cabinet, I realize that I hold office at the pleasure of the President," Bunye said when asked about his feelings.

"We are all professionals and when the President says it's time for us to go or to transfer, then we will follow."

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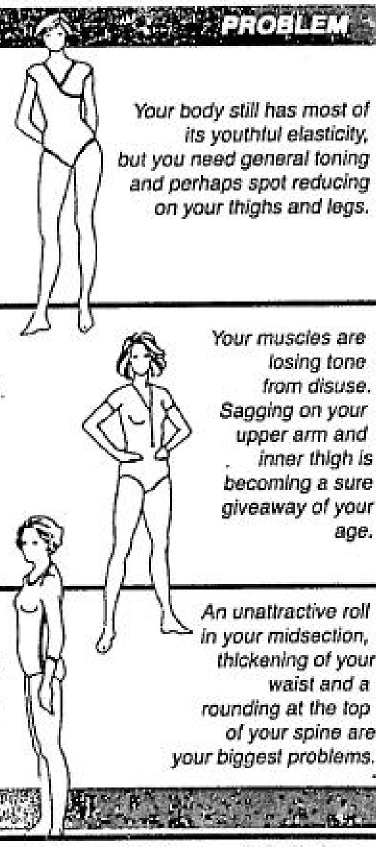

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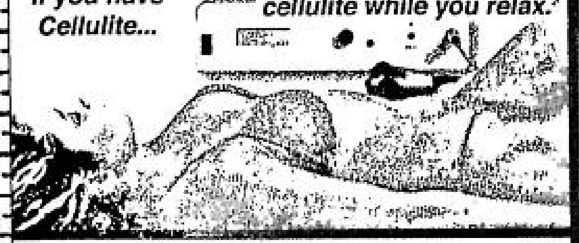

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GMA ups bounty to P3M for info on media . . .

From page A1

Consignado, who had reported on anomalies in government projects in his town was the sixth journalist killed this year. He was shot dead inside his house in Nagcarlan, Laguna, on Aug. 12.

The President ordered the PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation to protect journalists. Members of the House of Representatives called for an inquiry.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., a former journalist, initially announced a P2-million reward, saying the money would come from pooled contributions of congressmen, from his own pocket and from his pork barrel.

"We sympathize with the media community for the spate of senseless killings, which will be investigated relentlessly and thoroughly by the authorities," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

"I am directing the PNP and the NBI to team up with media organizations, nationally and locally, to get to the root of these crimes and to protect journalists under threat," she said. "If there are any threats to press freedom, they must be stopped."

Ms Arroyo ordered Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, who is also the anti-kidnapping czar, to look into the crimes against media workers.

"Only Iraq, a war-torn nation, has had more killings of journalists this year," said Carlos Conde, secretary general of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

Protests

Wearing black shirts and black arm bands, more than 100 province-based journalists marched to Camp Crame to demand a speedy solution to the cases of the murdered journalists.

Similar protests were held in the cities of Iloilo, Bacolod and Pagadian, according to the NUJP.

The NUJP count of media workers slain since the restoration of democracy in the country in 1986 stands at 55. PNP records list 49 journalists killed during the period.

In 2003, seven assassinations of newsmen were recorded by the NUJP, the biggest yearly total since 1986, which matched the record of strife-torn Columbia.

Manhunt teams formed

Chief Supt. Arturo Lomibao, head of the newly formed Task Force Newsman, said the killers had different motives, most of which were personal.

It just so happened that some of them came closely one after the other, Lomibao said.

Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay, who met with the protesters, directed the PNP units concerned to look into each unsolved case and form teams composed of 10 policemen each to hunt down the suspects.

At the meeting, journalists asked about the status of certain cases, such as those of Ruel Endrinal, Edgar Demalerio, Apolinario Pobeda, Eli Binoya and Candelario Cayona.

The NUJP was particularly concerned about the case of Demalerio, a Pagadian-based radio commentator, whose alleged killer, PO1 Guillermo Wapile, bolted the local jail in 2002.

A Mindanao-based reporter even hinted at taking "extrajudicial" action to seek justice for Demalerio.

Senior Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr., Task Force Newsman commander, said Wapile had been dismissed and his superior, Supt. Asuri Hawani, was also dismissed in connection with his escape.

Widows seek justice

In General Santos City, where about 90 journalists from print, radio and television held an indignation rally, journalists declared that the spate of killings would not scare them from performing their job.

The rally kicked off with a motorcade, which briefly stopped at the city police headquarters, where the journalists prayed and lit candles.

The wives of slain dzRH Radyo Natin commentator Ely Binoya and GMA Super Radyo reporter Jonathan Abayon spoke at the rally, asking for justice.

In Davao City, Chief Supt. Isidro Lapena, police chief for Southern Mindanao, said he would readily process applications of journalists to carry firearms but stressed these would only be issued to those with "verified and clear" threats on their lives.

Lapena stressed that journalists applying for gun licenses must know how to shoot.

Baguio, Bulacan

In Baguio City, NUJP vice president Art Alad-iw said the killings were "very alarming to press freedom."

Wearing black shirts, editors and reporters of community newspapers and radio stations in Bulacan also held a rally at the provincial capitol in Malolos City to protest alleged police inaction on the cases of slain journalists.

In Isabela, police officials supported moves to arm journalists with handguns, "especially those getting death threats and similar harassments," while in the performance of their duties.

But journalists should be properly trained before being allowed to carry firearms, said Supt. Agripino Lopez Jr., provincial police intelligence and investigation chief.

Consignado funeral

Priests and fellow mediamen in Laguna and other provinces were expected to attend the funeral of Consignado.

Msgr. Jerry Bitoon, vicar general of the San Pablo diocese in Laguna, condemned the killings of Consignado and other media workers, saying, "We are angered by the series of killings of media people for this means that democracy is under siege."

"Undoubtedly, we are dealing with an organized move to silence once and for all people whose vocation and profession is to convey freely the truth about what is happening around us," Bitoon said.

"Organized moves of the dark forces in our society must be matched with organized forces of the citizenry," he urged.

Fr. Jose Dizon of Kairos Philippines also condemned the killings as a direct affront to Philippine democracy.

The bereaved

Agripina Labing, 54, one of the eight Consignado siblings, said she wished the killer would be arrested to face justice. Marcelino Consignado, 49, the slain reporter's younger brother, issued the same plea.

Consignado left behind four children—Alma, 32; Liza, 30, Donna, 21, and Joven, 10—and five grandchildren. *With reports from Aquiles Z. Zonio and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Desiree Caluza and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk and Reuters*

Congress probe urged

By Cynthia D. Balana

A GROUP of lawmakers urged Congress yesterday to investigate the recent series of killings of journalists.

The call for an inquiry was embodied in a resolution filed by Bayan Muna party-list representatives led by Rep. Satur Ocampo and Rep. Gilbert Cesar Remulla (Nacionalista Party, second district, Cavite), both former journalists.

Other co-sponsors of the resolution were Bayan Muna Representatives Joel Virador and Teodoro Casiño and Anakpawis party-list Rep. Crispin Beltran.

The resolution said the killing of journalists year after year had made the Philippines one of the most dangerous places in the world for the working press.

It said most of the killings were suspected to have been triggered by exposés on corruption.

"We should look thoroughly into each case. It's difficult to just dismiss them and say some may not be work-related although we agree that some journalists are not clean," Ocampo said.

"However, we must protect every journalist's right to live and perform his role as a journalist."

Rep. Roseller Barinaga (Nationalist People's Coalition, Zamboanga del Norte) said: "They (journalists) face lawsuits and even death threats for their commitment to report the truth. They deserve to be compensated for the heroic job they do."

Rep. Antonio Cuenco (Lakas, Cebu City) said "We must join the President and the Speaker [in protecting] the welfare of the members of the Fourth Estate. Otherwise our democracy and very way of life will be in peril."

At the Senate, Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. criticized national police chief Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane for indirectly blaming the media for the spate of killings of crusading reporters.

He said: "General Ebdane said that without exposés, then there will be no killings. That's a wrong formula and I think it is an admission of incompetence. They should stop corruption in government so that there will be no exposés." *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

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Replace old wood with steel, bishop insists

From page A1

tear down the braces—more than 400 logs that date back to 1675.

Word of caution

Restoration architect Michael Manalo has warned that proceeding with the plan without a thorough study of "all the processes involved" would cause the old structure to crumble "in time."

The bishop said he considered the opposing views—his technical team's and that of the preservationists—before arriving at his decision.

Manalo, a member of the protesting group, has done extensive studies in the restoration work on old structures in Mexico. He pointed out that the equilibrium coursing through the Laoag Cathedral's roof, walls and buttresses would be "disturbed" if the old supports were taken out and replaced with something that was not compatible with an old structure.

The architect explained: "Steel is rigid. The church is made up of bricks that are bound by lime—soft, because the structure is supposed to move with earthquakes. If I place something hard [steel, for instance] and anchor it onto a new post [very likely concrete], what happens during an earthquake is that the post will [press against] the wall and cause it to crack. It may not happen tomorrow or after several earthquakes but it will, in time."

Manalo cited the case of the 16th-century church in nearby Dingras town, which now sports steel trusses.

Church officials had renovated the Dingras church, formerly known as "*rurog*" or ruins, by installing steel beams to hold up a new roof. Manalo said the steel braces caused the facade to tilt inward. "We don't want this to happen in Laoag."

The church giveth

Al Valenciano of Museo-Ilocos Norte said he was opposing the impending repairs on the Laoag Cathedral because the church was part of the Ilocano heritage. "The church gave [it to] us. But it is also [the church] that is taking it away," Valenciano said.

In fact, he added, only 27 of the 400 logs should be replaced, and 70 percent merely needed to be treated.

The preservationists suggested that church officials consider using electric posts that could be bought from power companies or forest farms.

Public safety, practicality

Salgado said the Church was concerned less with preservation than with public safety and practicality. Initially, he said, officials thought they should "make do with what is already there and add more wood if necessary."

But they found that the wooden trusses were "in such a state of disrepair," he said, "[that] they could no longer be treated." Or if they could, it would cost "a lot of money."

Also, the technical team told him that the logs would have to be imported from Australia, since none of those locally available were long enough to extend from the eaves up to the peak of the roof.

And after all the trouble, if they went about it that way, Salgado said, "we may need to replace the wood all over again after 30 years." On the other hand, steel "remains for a long period."

Why the fuss?

But why the fuss, he wondered. "No one will see what kind of trusses will be up there since they will be covered by a ceiling. By all means, the cathedral's original look will be preserved."

He assured the parishioners that the church would be repaired in such a way that it could withstand earthquakes. "But no structure is guaranteed to endure an earthquake of a really great magnitude," he said. "We only have to pray that no such [disaster] occurs."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 17, 2004
20th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezk 28:1-10
Gospel: Mt 19:23-30

Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I say to you: it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Yes, believe me: it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven."

On hearing this the disciples were astonished and said, "Who, then, can be saved?" Jesus looked steadily at them and answered, "For humans it is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

Then Peter spoke up and said, "You see we have given up everything to follow you: what will be our lot?"

Jesus answered, "You who have followed me, listen to my words: on the Day of Renewal, when the Son of Man sits on his throne in glory, you, too, will sit on twelve thrones to rule the twelve tribes of Israel. As for those who have left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children or property for my Name's sake, they will receive a hundredfold and be given eternal life. Many who are now first will be last, and many who are now last will be first."

Commentary

The young man in yesterday's reading is never again heard of in the gospels. What became of him we don't know. If he had become a great failure we would surely have heard of him. Perhaps he was a failure even as a failure!-a very mediocre failure.

"Easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle!" This highly colorful language is typical of Aramaic, it seems. Nevertheless there have been attempts to "explain" it: someone suggested that "camel" may have been some kind of thick cord; and someone else suggested that the "eye of the needle" may have been a narrow pass in the mountains. Like many explanations, these leave you feeling that wine has been turned into water. Jesus spoke like a poet-or more than a poet, a prophet-and not like the sensible calculating young man who was never heard of again.

Peter and the others had not made sensible calculations; they had taken a risk. It may not have been much that they gave up, but it was everything they had. And they gave themselves. The two things go together: giving things and giving oneself. They are a single habit of mind: giving. It is not wealth in itself that keeps the rich from entering the kingdom, but the habit of not giving it away.

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Carl, Clarence . . .

From page A1

City's Bronx borough.

"They're behaving like babies who have had a craniofacial operation half as long as theirs," said David Staffenberg, one of the two lead surgeons on the boys' medical team.

The twins underwent a 17-hour procedure on Aug. 4, the fourth and last in a series conducted over a period of 10 months.

Carl, who has been more subdued than his brother, still refuses to eat solid food, although hospital officials said his spirits had improved.

"Carl is smiling for the first time since the operation, and Clarence is back to his old self," Steven Osborne, CHAM spokesperson, announced.

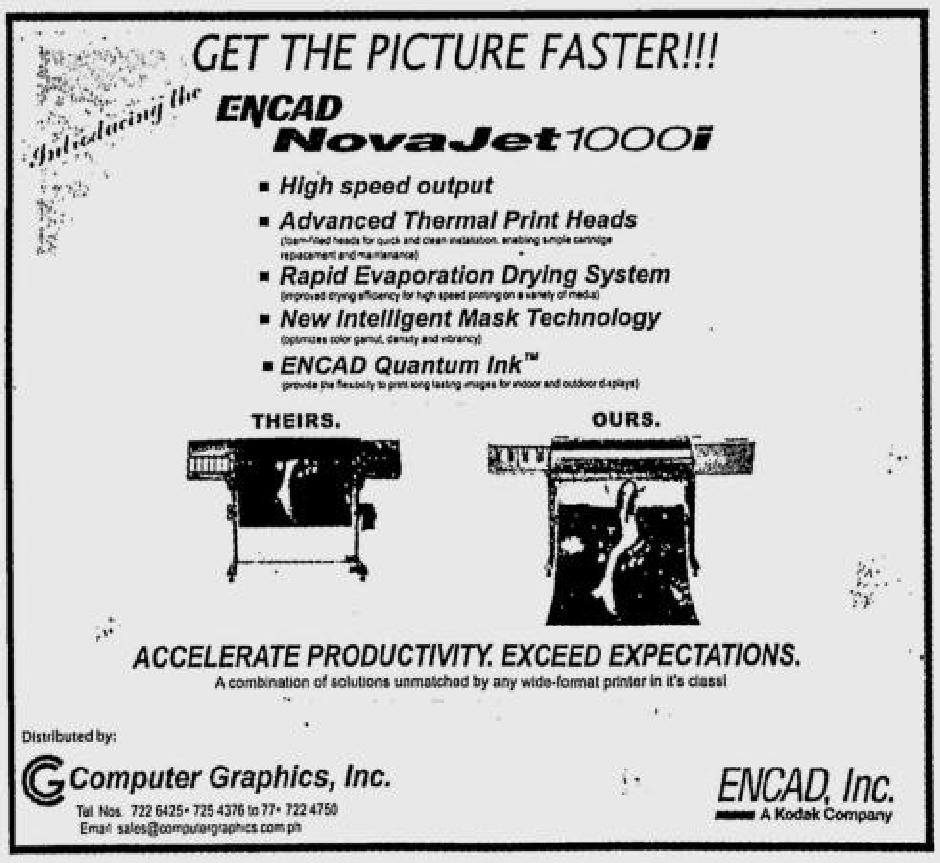
Clarence, who has always suffered from hypertension, is off his blood pressure medicine with no adverse reactions, Staffenberg added.

Making faces

Playing with his mother Arlene over the weekend, Clarence was smiling widely and making fish faces by puckering his lips, Osborne said.

Clarence was also keeping time to the music on a Wiggles tape with his rattle and a new set of jingle bells.

Osborne said doctors were considering moving the boys to separate rooms "to care for them better and to make sure no infections go back and forth." **AP**



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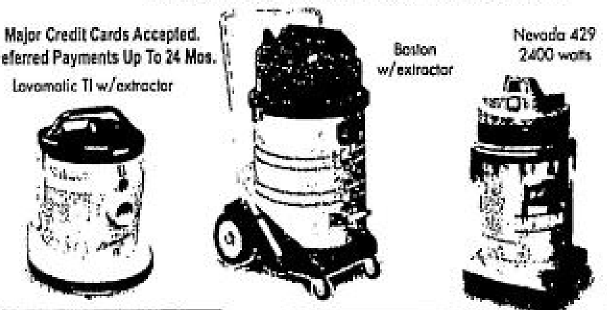

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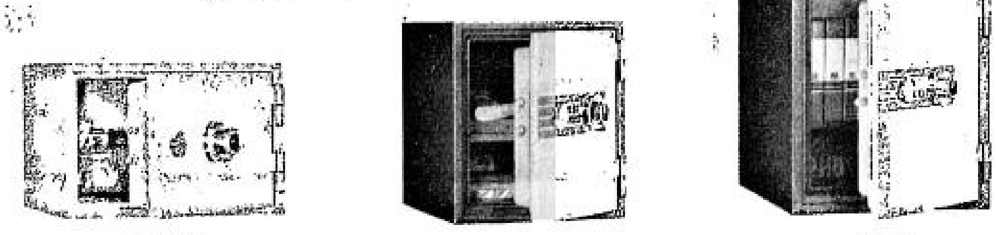

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Chavez survives recall vote

CARACAS, Venezuela—President Hugo Chavez survived a popular referendum to oust him in a vote that attracted so many Venezuelans that they overwhelmed ballot stations, according to results announced Monday.

Backers of the leftist populist president immediately set off fireworks and began celebrating in the streets of the capital in the predawn darkness.

Francisco Carrasquero, president of the National Elections Council, stopped short of declaring Chavez the outright winner. But vote counts he released showed the firebrand former army paratrooper had a virtually insurmountable 58-42 percent lead, with 94 percent of the vote counted.

Carrasquero said 4,991,483 votes had been cast against Chavez's recall, with 3,576,517 in favor.

Chavez claimed victory in a victory speech from a palace balcony.

"It is absolutely impossible that the victory of the 'no' be reversed," Chavez told thousands of cheering and whistling backers.

Haydee Deutsch, an opposition leader, said fraud had been committed and that the opposition "has no doubt that we won by an overwhelming majority."

Indicating a possible split in the five-member National Elections Council, Sobella Mejia —one of the members who is aligned with the opposition—told a news conference before the tallies were announced that any release of partial figures would be premature and invalid.

There was no immediate reaction from former US President Jimmy Carter or Cesar Gaviria, head of the Organization of American States, who helped monitor the vote.

Questions about the future of the world's fifth-largest oil exporter have contributed to record high oil prices. On Monday, crude oil prices hit a new all-time high of $46.90 per barrel amid uncertainty about Chavez's rule and continuing unrest in Iraq.

The sheer number of voters in Sunday's referendum—believed to be a record for any election in Venezuela—along with problems with electronic thumbprint ID machines, caused election officials to postpone the polls' closing to midnight—eight hours later than first scheduled. They said the polling stations would be kept open even longer until everyone in line voted.

The first-ever recall vote for a president in Venezuela's history was aimed at putting a lid on years of often-violent political unrest, including a bloody coup, and followed a lengthy and complicated process of mass signings of petitions.

By freely spending on social programs with Venezuela's oil revenues, Chavez has become a champion among the majority poor. But his vilification of the rich, close ties with Cuban leader Fidel Castro and centralization of power have earned him many enemies among the better off.

Some lines at polling places extended for 2 km. Opposition leaders appealed to Venezuelans to bring food and water to those still in line.

Even as votes were still being cast Sunday night, hundreds of "Chavistas," as Chavez supporters are called, converged on the presidential palace, blowing whistles and chanting that Chavez won. Leaflets called on "everyone to go to the streets to celebrate and defend the victory."

Enrique Mendoza, a state governor considered a likely presidential candidate if Chavez were ousted, urged voters to not abandon the lines, saying every ballot would be counted. He blasted the "absurd delays and technical difficulties" in the voting.

Some of the electronic thumbprint registration machines, aimed at preventing people from voting more than once, had difficulty registering thumbprints. Even Chavez had to move to another machine to register his thumbprint after the first one failed. *AP*

VENEZUELAN President Hugo Chavez waves outside a polling station in Caracas after voting, Aug. 15. Venezuelans voted on Sunday in a historic referendum that will either remove left-winger Chavez from the presidency of the world's No. 5 oil exporter or keep him in office for two more years. REUTERS

Pope nearing end of his life, says cardinal

BRUSSELS—Pope John Paul's health has deteriorated and the head of the Roman Catholic Church may be near the end of his life, a Belgian cardinal was quoted as saying on Monday.

Pope John Paul, 84, who has Parkinson's disease and severe arthritis, wound up an emotional visit to the French miracle shrine of Lourdes on Sunday.

The devout crowd of about 200,000 listened to his words from a field on the banks of the Gave River in the shadow of the basilica built over the grotto where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared to the peasant girl Bernadette Soubirous in 1858.

They cheered him like coaches for a struggling athlete when his words faltered and when he gasped for breath.

At one point he was heard to mutter softly in Polish: "Help me," and later said, "I have to finish." An aide brought him some water in a white plastic cup and he finished his sermon.

The 84-year-old Pope's illness and frailty has been very evident on the trip, the 104th of his pontificate, made even more poignant because he has been surrounded by fellow sufferers, many of them in wheelchairs and on stretchers.

"It was one of the most moving celebrations ever," Belgian Cardinal Godfried Danneels, who is seen as a leading contender to succeed John Paul, was quoted as saying in the Belgian daily Het Laatste Nieuws.

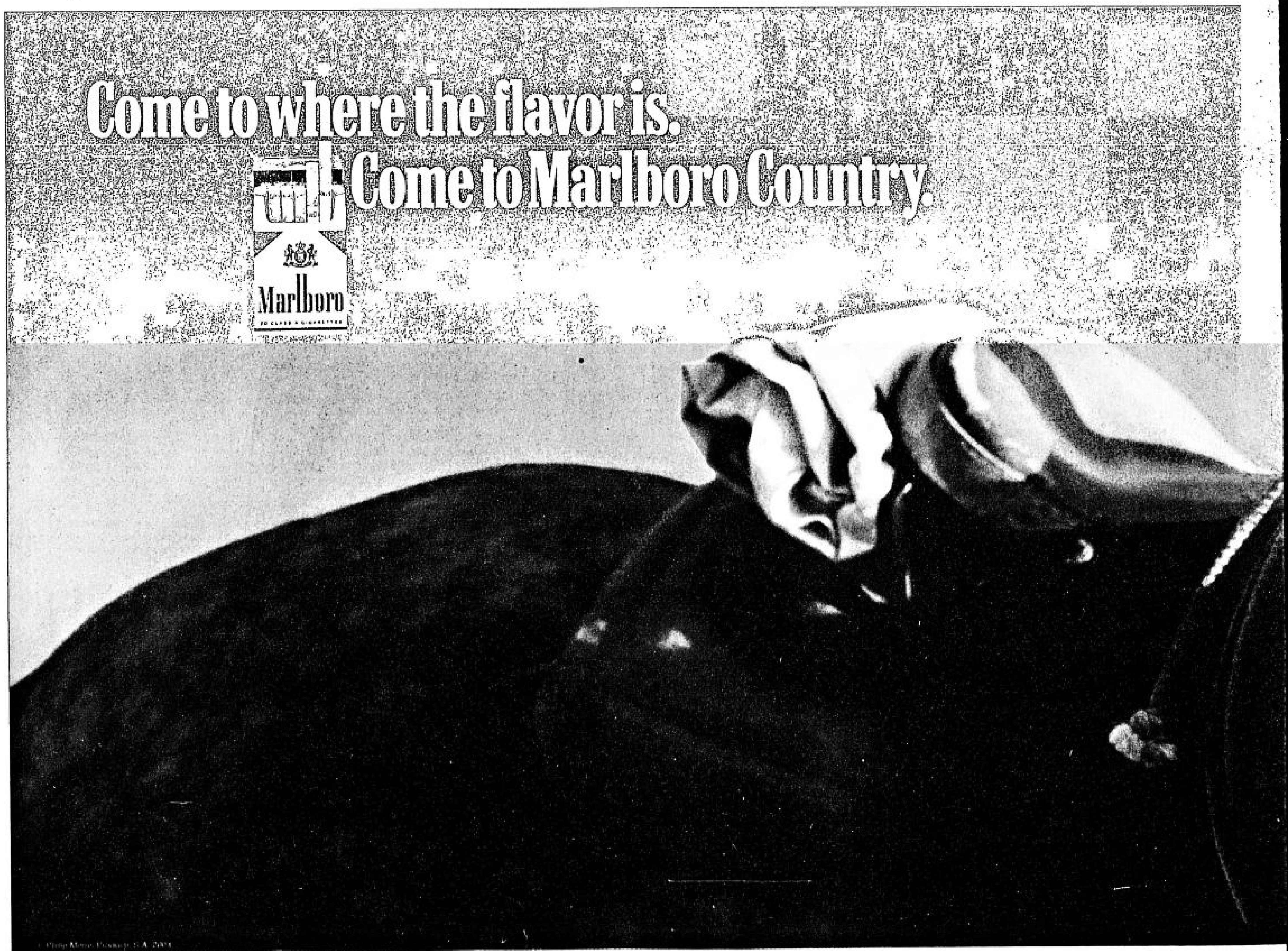
"The Pope's health has seriously weakened. When the Pope says: 'I end my pilgrimage here,' that could mean two things.

That, at least was how people listening to him in the field interpreted it. It was almost his goodbye to Lourdes and maybe also to his life," Danneels added.

The Pope, whose speech is often hard to understand, no longer walks in public and has to be wheeled around in a special chair.

It is not the first time his frailty on a foreign trip has fueled speculation over how long he has left to live.

During a visit to Slovakia last September, he was so weak his aides had to read most of his speeches. Many people believed then that he would not travel again. *Reuters*



Government Warning: Cigarette sn

Uneasy calm in Najaf before expected US assault

NAJAF, Iraq—Thick smoke rose from Najaf early Monday ahead of an expected major military assault on Shiite militiamen holed up in the holy city, as a key national conference in Baghdad entered its second day.

And in a hint of the possible cost of an attack by US and Iraqi government forces, the US military said that three US marines were killed "as a result of enemy action" in Najaf province Sunday.

"There is thick smoke rising from the city, but there is no gunfire or explosions. The city is quiet," an AFP correspondent said.

Sporadic fighting occurred in Najaf Sunday after a two-day truce following a week of clashes ended with the breakdown of negotiations between rebel cleric Moqtada Sadr and the Iraqi government.

"A major assault by forces will be launched quickly to bring the Najaf fight to an end," interior ministry spokesperson Sabah Kadhim said late Sunday.

"This matter has to be brought to conclusion as fast as possible and we want to bring the situation to normalcy soon."

And Prime Minister Iyad Allawi reiterated his insistence that the militia disarm and quit Najaf for there to be any peaceful solution to the crisis.

On Sunday, foreign and Iraqi journalists and cameramen were ordered out of Najaf by local police, as authorities said their safety could not be guaranteed.

Moqtada's Mehdi Army is occupying the mausoleum of Imam Ali, one of the holiest sites in Shiite Islam, in the center of the old city, and parts of a vast cemetery nearby.

One person was killed and two wounded Sunday when US troops fired on pro-Sadr demonstrators near the cemetery, a surgeon said.

Bullets also hit the northern wall of the Imam Ali shrine, eyewitnesses said.

Events in Najaf provoked disruption on the first day of the national conference in Baghdad, and a top Sadr aide Tuesday called on Shiite parties participating in the meeting to walk out.

"Shiite parties like the Dawa party and the Supreme Council for Revolution in Iraq should quit the national conference," Sheikh Ahmed al-Shaibani told reporters on the telephone.

The Sadr camp rejected a government invitation to participate in the conference.

Elsewhere, a teenage girl and a 6-year-old boy were killed and four other relatives wounded when one of three mortar bombs aimed at a US base in the restive city of Baquba hit their home, their father and the police said.

Three Iraqi national guards were also wounded when their patrol vehicle hit a homemade explosive device as they were entering Baquba, 60 km north of Baghdad, after completing duty at a checkpoint, one of the wounded guards said.

"We were six of us in our pick-up vehicle which hit the roadside device," Zohair Abdel Karim said.

"After the explosion, some insurgents also fired at us and we responded, after which they ran away."

Baquba sees frequent clashes between the US military, Iraqi security forces and Sunni Muslim insurgents.

On Sunday, five people were killed when US forces carried out multiple bombing raids in the flash point city of Fallujah, after coming under attack by Sunni Muslim insurgents, the military said.

And in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah deputy governor Adnan al-Sharifi said a US journalist, Micah Garen, was kidnapped Saturday while reporting on archaeological sites in the area. *AFP*

US reporter missing

BAGHDAD—A French-American journalist has disappeared along with his Iraqi translator in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah, a deputy governor said.

The two disappeared in Nasiriyah on Friday, said Adnan al-Shoraify, deputy governor of Dhi Qar province. He said the translator's family had first reported the two missing.

Al-Shoraify identified the American as Micah Garen and said he worked for US-based Four Corners Media..

According to its website, the group is a "documentary organization working in still photography, video and print media" that is working in Iraq. The website says Garen is one of the organizations several managers.

Al-Shoraify said Garen was working on a project involving antiquities near Nasiriyah.

The pan-Arab television station Al-Jazeera also reported the journalist missing on Monday, but said he had been kidnapped and provided no other details. Al-Shoraify could not confirm whether he was abducted. *AP*

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Editorials

'Textese'

"TEXTING" or short message service has been very much in the news lately. First, there was a proposal to tax text messages, which was quickly shot down by an army of protesting "texters." Now, the Office of the Ombudsman is tapping "text power" to encourage people to report graft and corruption in government.

In media organizations, a debate is raging over the language to be used in publishing text messages to newspapers and TV stations. Last week, the INQUIRER editors decided to retain the original language of text messages as sent to the newspaper. Most of the editors said that the language of the original should be retained if the paper has to reflect the truth—for the truth is that that is the way the messages are worded.

Texting is exerting a great influence on the English language. In the Philippines, it is causing the further deterioration of English which is already bad because of the poor quality of instruction and the aversion of students to reading and writing.

Many teachers have noted that in written exams, students would write their answers in "textese" or text language. Some teachers said they always correct all the words, phrases and sentences in text language and deduct points for each error.

The use of text language by cell phone owners is a worldwide phenomenon. Lovers and "defenders" of the English language in the United States and the United Kingdom have called attention to its pernicious effects. A similar concern has been expressed in Australia. Typical of the comments is that of Jo Carr, a sociolinguistics lecturer at the Queensland University of Technology, who said that text messages are taking their toll on grammar and punctuation. In Scotland, educators have warned that children's obsession with text messaging is seriously affecting classroom standards of English.

If countries where English is the first language are complaining about the pernicious effects of texting on English, the problem must be worse in the Philippines where English is only a second language. But text language cannot be done away with. For one thing, it meets the texters' need for brevity and speed.

Umberto Eco, writer and cultural critic, said that we live in an age where the diminutive, the brief and the simple are highly prized in communication. Undoubtedly, texting embodies the intellectual and cultural climate of the text era and generation.

"Textese" is here to stay, but teachers have to put their foot down and insist on the use of standard English grammar, spelling and punctuation in class work. We cannot afford a further deterioration of English and suffer horribly in the global competition in the intellectual and economic fields.

The quiet man

EVEN as the INQUIRER was struggling to stay alive back in its birthing days, it was politically incorrect, if not downright dangerous to one's health, to invest in the paper.

But one man came forward—the man behind the INQUIRER's founding chair—Jose Z. Apostol. He advanced the salaries of the employees. And he did it each time we were on the brink of collapse for lack of cash transfusion. This, he did without much prodding from his wife, Eugenia Duran-Apostol. He could have said no. After all, we were practising brinkmanship journalism in a time of the cholera of dictatorship. If investors stayed away, we only had ourselves to blame.

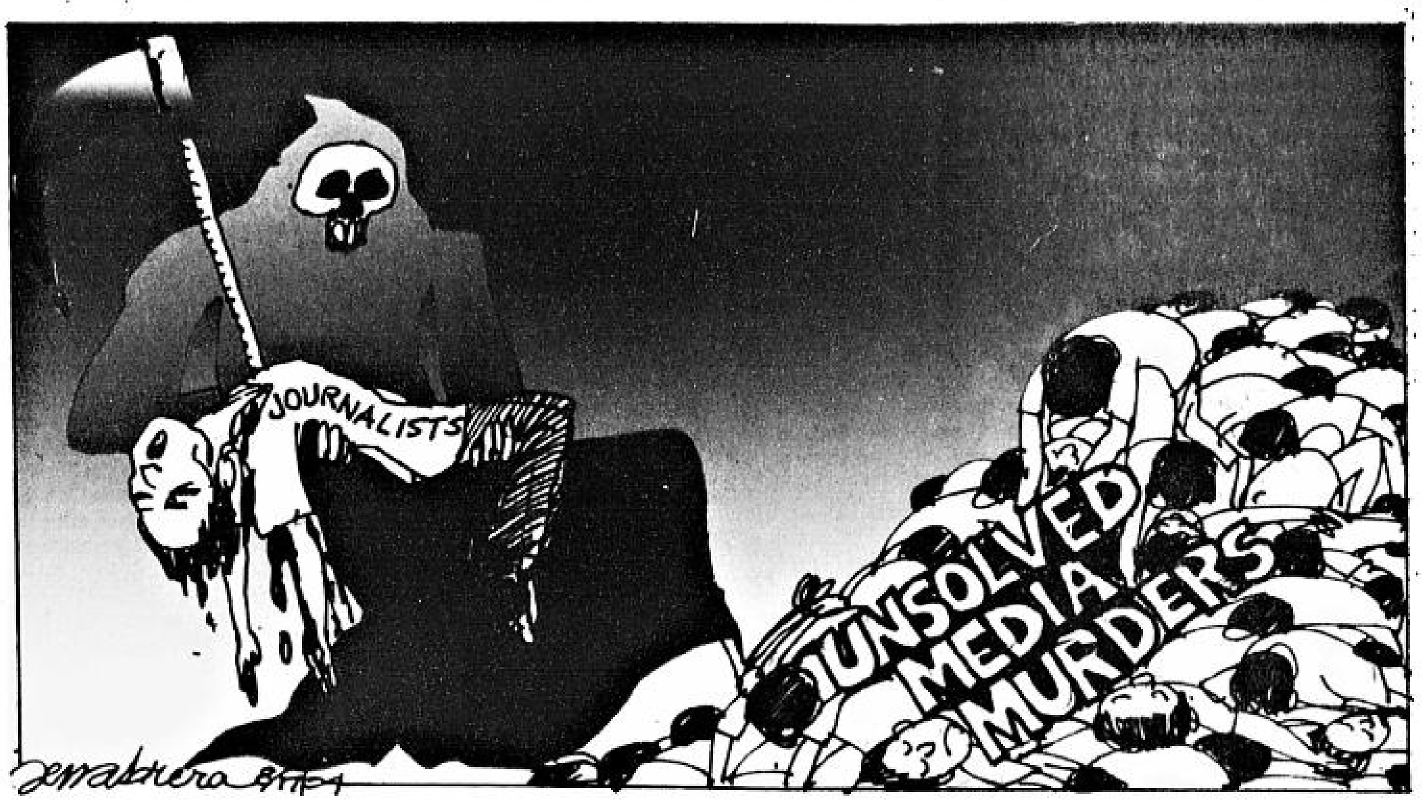
Earlier on, he had paid for the rental of an extra room for Mr. & Ms. Special Edition, the INQUIRER's forerunner. He also provided the repairs to make the office habitable.

But all this time, Apostol's contributions to the making of the INQUIRER was only known to a few. He had been the quiet man behind his ebullient, go-for-broke, in-your-face wife. But always, in our direst need, Apostol was our big-hearted supporter, putting his money where his heart was.

Yet, he was never one for marching in the streets, or for collecting the credit for keeping the INQUIRER going. Now it can be told that Apostol was truly one of the X-factors in the INQUIRER's success story.

When he passed away last Friday at the age of 81, we decided that it was time to make the secret public. It is time for the INQUIRER to give credit where it is due. Long overdue is what it is.

Good night, dear quiet man of our affection. May the angels welcome you with our gratitude.



The sound chamber

Viewpoint

Juan L. Mercado

THOSE who write for the INQUIRER and the Cebu Daily News, with their global webpage, Inq7.net, find reactions quickly barrel in from all over the world.

My feedbacks range from a homesick hospital supervisor in Canada, a Filipino Dominican in Ethiopia, OFWs in Abu Dhabi, a surgeon in Florida, and during Sen. Aquilino Pimentel's shoddy filibuster, cloistered nuns in Mindanao.

They whisk back an old image: that journalists are padlocked by their craft into society's sound chamber.

A babel of voices batters the journalist who huddles in the middle, explained Louis Lyons. At Nieman Foundation, Lyons oversaw Harvard University's sabbaticals for editors. A cacophony erupts from strong voices to weak whimpers, rising voices and those fading, shrill screams to modulated tones, etc.

The journalist must learn to listen, Lyons said, and out of this chaos, extract what is significant, relevant—and true. He must think for himself, if he is to help those he writes for, or broadcasts to.

This function underpins feedback on the current murder of journalists. It's embedded in current press controversies over denial to right of reply by aggrieved readers.

From Bataan, Ricardo Seron writes: "In connection with the murder of 56 newsmen, your Viewpoint column 'The god' (PDI, 8/12/04) asks: "Did anybody pinpoint the culture of impunity?"

"The Human Rights Center of Ateneo de Manila, in fact, surveyed 128 law enforcers nationwide on impunity. The study zeroed in on military officers and officials linked with murder and homicide," Seron recalls. "But the conclusions are relevant to the upsurge in the newsmen's rubouts."

Trying a military officer or a public official is an uphill battle, the survey found. Delays in both investigation and prosecution are directly proportional to the rank the accused holds. Just look at how the Marcoses and Estradas remain scot-free so far.

"Victims or witnesses are often reluctant to volunteer information. The cause is interlocking fear of reprisal, financial fixing, distrust of the judicial system or the perception that such investigations fizzle out in the end.

"Most respondents agreed that there's basis for the fear of reprisal. The theory of our legal system is equal justice for all. That is as far as it goes, Ateneo's Fr. Joaquin Bernas SJ has pointed out. The powerful can always seek shelter in impunity."

However, V. Ricasio in New York, Pepeton J. Anton in California and Marwan Rasan here fret over professional lapses.

Anton says many columnists belong to the "fire-aim-ready school." Thus, court enforcement of the right of reply is needed. "Almost to a man, local columnists regurgitate extremist views peddled by known left-wing liberals in the global media," Ricasio adds. "Some wage their own personal wars," quote sources as if they had read original documents when they only lifted digests. "Few have the honor to retract their fabrications."

Rasan focuses on commentary "black holes"—the lack of context, specially in sensitive or ethnic areas. Columnists ignored inconvenient facts, like Iraq being a secular state with relative social permissiveness. Osama bin Laden as much as President Bush despised Saddam, Ralsan points out. "As a result of the war, Iraq is now being swept by a wave of Islamic extremism that may just turn it into an Islamic theocracy... of far greater danger than Saddam ever was."

Others blame "inborn Islamic hatred (albeit extremist)" for the blowing up of Christian churches in Iraq. There's no mention that Sunni and Shi'a mosques were previously targeted with greater casualties. Vital context is cut out, Raslan said. If background were inserted, they'd show up columnists as silly.

Columns also spur requests for reprints. Former Senate President Jovito Salonga's office asked for "Rare consensus" (PDI, 6/29/04). "Ovarian lottery" (PDI, 8/3/04) saw researchers requesting for 6th Nutrition Survey data. We try to respond promptly.

In this country, the powerful extract what they want while the poor grant what they must. The e-mail traffic reflects that fact, as both the powerful and victims react to columns on pocket-book issues like coconut levy. A Cabinet member asked for the statement, by Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and 95 other leaders, that the levy was not a crony slush fund, cited in "The Zacchaeus precedent" (PDI, 5/18/04).

The same column brought in this reaction from Porfirio Kuizon of Bato, Leyte: "My mother and I, are typical of millions of small coconut farmers who were given stock certificates of United Coconut Planters Bank". These were "signed by Eduardo Cojuangco and Teodoro Regala, for our copra... but we were never paid any dividend after three decades.

"Thousands, who hold these 'worthless scraps of paper,' went to their graves, waiting for justice. My mother was one of them. She passed away in 1976. Yet, INQUIRER's Carla Gomez reports that five individuals owned a total of 167,285,150 shares. Six corporations claim 100,927,658 shares. Are these shares earning dividends while the small farmers individual shares are worthless?"

Furious defenses of Pimentel's filibuster were draped in religious terms: "You'll be judged by God. Don't you recognize the father of lies?"

"You and I, madam, and everybody else will also be judged," I replied. "We owe God a death—and after that the judgement. Saint Paul. You recognize him?"

"Become an atheist like me," a reader suggests.

I e-mailed back: "Thanks but an atheist is like a corpse in the coffin—all dressed up and nowhere to go." He went ballistic.

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Edge of the precipice

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

THE FIRST time I heard it was last year, from people warning about an impending collapse of our financial system and our going the way of Argentina. I figured much of it was just election rhetoric, with its natural hyperbolic spin. Not so anymore. The figures are grim and the doomsayers, who have become more plentiful over the past weeks, have every reason to warn more shrilly of doom.

We are headed the way of Argentina, unless something drastic is done about it. The reasons that brought Argentina to spectacular disaster were a spectacular budget deficit—that is to say, a yawning gap between what government earned and what it spent—and spectacular corruption. The first was caused in part by poor tax collection and in part by an unmanageable internal and external debt. Payment of interest rates alone for the debts caused massive hemorrhaging in government finances.

That is our situation today.

I did hear people warn last year that we may soon see the peso turn into "Japanese money." That is not the current yen but the "Japanese money" during the War. You still hear the old folks tell about it, how they used to carry a whole *bayong* or bagful of money issued by the Japanese occupation government to buy the few items that were for sale. Most everyone preferred to barter one good for another.

The scenario is not as farfetched as it sounds. Our problem is no longer just the foreign debt, it is the national one. According to pro-administration representative, Eduardo Zialcita, who has called for an audit, the total government debt currently stands at a mind-boggling P3.35 trillion as of last year, up from P2.8 trillion in 2002. A little more than 20 years ago, in 1981, it stood only at P48.9 billion. To pay for that debt, government today is using almost half of its total revenues—42.6 percent last year—for interest alone. In 1999, it was paying only a little more than a fourth of its total revenues—26.5 percent—for it.

Bobby de Ocampo was already warning last year about what this scale of debt servicing meant. A recent survey by IMD, a European business education center, and the Asian Institute of Management found out that the Philippines was number 30 among countries in basic infrastructure—number 30 among 30. The lowest of the low. The Philippines also showed the lowest per capita growth in Asia and the poorest ability to reduce poverty. An ADB survey further found us to have the second poorest tax collection capacity out of 75 countries.

Ben Diokno of the UP School of Economics offers figures there. Government spending on infrastructure dropped from P96.5 billion in 1999 to only P49.7 billion in 2003. Spending for education and health services also dropped from 3.4 of gross domestic product in 1999 to 2.8 percent of GDP in 2003. What this means, says Diokno, is that we are narrowing our capacity for growth in the future. You do not invest in infrastructure and in the quality of life of the people, particularly their education, you won't have the physical means or human potential to grow.

The situation is not unlike an addict who must meet a need now even if he has to throw away his future for it. This is throwing away the future to meet a current need, which is to pay off debt interest. One is tempted to say we can always pack people off to work as menials abroad. But given that the foreign labor market is shrinking and other countries are investing in improving the skills of their workers, you realize we're in very deep sheesh.

The proffered solutions for this include: building a strong coalition to back a credible adjustment plan to deal with the mounting debt and budget deficit; improving revenues; and curbing corruption. But here comes the scary part: Can this government do it?

The people who did not protest when Francis Pangilinan et. al. were railroading the count with "Noted" may now wish to contemplate the implications of their silence. I myself had been warning about the consequences of perverting the electoral process to attain "the lesser evil," which is GMA instead of FPJ. The point is not who wins, it is how he or she wins. You pervert a process, you will have problems with credibility. You have problems with credibility, you are not going to build strong coalitions, let alone unify the nation. Maybe, Ibon exaggerates about most Filipinos disbelieving GMA won the elections, maybe not. But that at least many Filipinos harbor the thought cannot augur well for the President inspiring them to rally around her to meet this threat.

The recent tax frenzy is clearly an effort to head off the crisis, but it is too little, if not too late. Its basic flaw is that it means to tax the poor and middle class rather than the rich—because the poor and middle class do not have corporate lawyers and money to bribe the Bureau of Internal Revenue with, while the rich do. GMA's path to re-election, which was based on making deals with the devil himself, again poses hurdles in this respect. Who among her backers is she willing to tax to death to bring this country to life?

And, finally, corruption. Well, Jose Pidal never got punished for using the alias Mike Arroyo. GMA never got punished for bleeding the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp. dry to put up posters and various campaign ads and paraphernalia. And we have crops of newly elected lawmakers who, like their President, spent a fortune to get a crack at public office; and newly appointed officials who, like their President, spent all their waking hours campaigning for their boss. Are they now likely to spend the rest of their waking hours reveling only in the honor of serving the people?

We're teetering over the edge of the precipice. And it will take more than Olympic gymnastic contortions to bring us back on solid ground.

On the diplomatic front

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I READ with fascination the recent installation of Cambridge-educated Lee Hsien Loong, 52, as the new prime minister of Singapore, and how he named his father, Lee Kuan Yew, the architect of modern Singapore, "minister mentor" and his immediate predecessor, former PM Goh Chok Tong, "senior minister," a post occupied by Lee Kuan Yew during Goh's term. Thus, power over the progressive island state remains consolidated in this troika, marked by extensive preparation for their respective roles. Equally fascinating is that there is not only political but also economic control by one family. Lee Hsien Loong's second wife, Cambridge-educated Ho Ching, 51, heads Temasek Holdings, the investment company that handles billions of dollars worth of properties for the government, including Singapore Airlines and Singapore Telecommunications, said to be Southeast Asia's largest phone company. SingTel, in turn, is headed by the new PM's brother, Lee Hsien Yang.

* * *

For years, talk of the Lees' firm grip on Singapore's political and economic power as well as unverified rumors of some degree of economic manipulation in high places have swirled in Southeast Asian circles. The wonder is that few people complain. (Can anyone imagine the same situation here?) One reason is the autocratic grip on the press, which the new PM wants to relax. But the bigger reason is that Singapore has progressed economically to a degree unchallenged in the region. Singaporeans are by and large happy about where their taxes go.

* * *

Switzerland's National Day, hosted by Ambassador Lise Favre two weeks ago, proved to be a happy celebration of three events that are relevant not only to its history but also to the Philippines. First was the 200th anniversary of the first presentation of the great German writer Friedrich Schiller's masterpiece, "William Tell," about the medieval Swiss hero whom the ambassador described as "our version of Lapu-Lapu." Thanks to Schiller, William Tell, who fought the oppression of a foreign power (Austria) became "a universal icon of freedom, resistance and independence," said the ambassador. In fact, his famous crossbow became "a symbol, a brand name of Swiss precision, quality and reliability."

* * *

Favre related that decades later, our national hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, translated the play into Tagalog "for its embodiment of the values and ideals of freedom and civil rights for which Rizal gave his life." In fact, she noted that his intellectual colleague in Europe, Mariano Ponce, founder and editor of La Solidaridad, the anti-Spanish newspaper, wrote: "Though they have not studied in institutions of higher learning, the Swiss had instinctive wisdom of living citizenship and the safe-guarding of freedom... While they did not know the Magna Carta nor the Rights of Man, they nonetheless possessed a lucid expression and a robust faith in their legitimate rights and their rightful share of the blessings which Divine Providence had dispensed to them." Coincidentally, Swiss sculptor Richard Kissling, who made William Tell's monument in Switzerland, was also commissioned to do the Rizal Monument at the Luneta, after winning the international competition in 1906.

* * *

The second occasion was the 30th anniversary of the first referendum on the creation of the new canton of Jura, which was "borne out of a separatist movement." Jura is an area near the French border with about 70,000 mainly Catholic and French-speaking people (1 percent of the Swiss population) who were incorporated into Protestant German-speaking Berne by the Vienna Congress of 1815, after the Napoleonic wars. The mismatch of cultures and history there first emerged after World War I. As Favre put it, the long years of at times violent struggle over the Jura issue represent "the common or universal tale of historic religious and cultural differences," involving "a frustrated minority feeling economically neglected and politically discriminated." Thus, the creation of Jura canton resulted from the "institutional quest" for a democratic and federalist solution that happily proved "both sustainable and beneficial with time."

Favre's remarks brought a sense of déjà vu to the Pinoys, including the Filipino-Swiss Business Council led by Nestlé chair Johnny Santos. In fact, she must have read our thoughts on the parallelism with our Mindanao issue, for she said added that she was "most interested in the on-going debate on federalism in the Philippines" and the "promising new emphasis" it recently received from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

* * *

The third celebration was over the expansion of the European Union from 15 to 25 member states last May 1. Favre observed that with this historic milestone, "landlocked Switzerland becomes a bit more of an island in Europe." She noted with a laugh that in past decades the Swiss were brought up to think their country was at "the heart of Europe," but today, with the expansion of the EU eastward to include countries from the old Eastern bloc, *Tchequia* (the Spanish name for the Czech Republic) now claims the distinction of being the new center of Europe.

Favre explained that Switzerland is not yet a member of the EU for the same reasons that kept them for so long from joining the United Nations. "This being direct democracy, both a privilege and a constraint, it gives the Swiss people the last word on the integration issue, and my compatriots remain very jealous of their traditions." She said the Swiss are afraid that by joining the EU, they might lose what has been "their raison d'etre, their independence, their neutrality, their identity, and last but not least, their standard of living." But she also said that joining the EU remains the Swiss government's ultimate objective, hopefully around 2010.

Justice for Melissa

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A NEWSPAPER editorial has called it a "monstrous decision," the resolution issued by senior state prosecutor Robert Lao dismissing the charge of frustrated parricide filed against businessman Robbie Martel by his estranged wife Melissa Mercado Martel.

Readers of this column would remember the account, told largely from Melissa's point of view, of how, in the midst of yet another violent argument that had marked their decades-long marriage, Robbie shot Melissa in the abdomen after whispering to her: "*Pu---- ina mo*, who do you think you are?"

Well, his implied threat seems to have worked. For instead of giving credence to Melissa's first-hand testimony, Lao instead chose to believe what he called the "disinterested" accounts of two bodyguards under Robbie Martel's employ who said the shooting was an "accident."

One of Melissa's lawyers, Tunting Cruz Matters, called to say that they would "continue to fight," since Lao's decision was so shot full of holes "it would be laughed out of law classrooms." Lao even took the extraordinary step of passing judgment on the merits of the case (instead of merely evaluating the evidence) by declaring that Melissa's "narration of the events (is) far from the truth." Lao apparently also took it against Melissa that she filed the case against Robbie a year after the alleged shooting, without taking into consideration that Melissa had to spend four months in the intensive care unit of the Makati Medical Center fighting for her life and more months in a private room, while pondering her fate, including the loss of custody of her children.

* * *

ROBBIE Martel's own version of the events was that he and Melissa were fighting for possession of the gun which Melissa supposedly picked up during their argument. But as Matters points out, "How could she have tussled with him when she was already bruised and battered?" Did the prosecutor give any credence at all to photos and medical records on Melissa's physical state after she was rushed to Makati Med?

Also apparently working against Melissa was an affidavit she signed while still confined in Makati Med that said what happened to her was an "accident." But Melissa had already explained that at the time her husband's lawyers presented her with the document, she was faced with millions in hospital and doctors' bills, which she and her family were in no position to pay. It was implied that if she didn't sign then her husband and his family would refuse to pick up the tab.

On another front, some commentators seem to imply that because Melissa has sued Robbie for child custody and support, she has somehow tainted the "purity" of her cause by asking for money. As if even millions would ever compensate for two decades of living in constant fear and pain, of public humiliation, of having friends call her and ask first if Robbie was around because, as they recalled, "we never knew what would set him off on a rampage and start beating up Melissa."

Did the prosecutor ever consider what years of living under such pressure and threats could do to a woman's spirit and sense of self? That Melissa even found the courage to confront her violent husband and his influential family in court says much about how far she has gone in her journey from victim to survivor. But the justice system, it seems, has even farther to go before it understands the gender dimensions of such cases.

* * *

AND speaking of gender justice, the UP Center for Women's Studies and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women will be handing out tomorrow, Aug. 18, the Gender Justice Awards, meant to raise the level of awareness of judges on the need for "rendering gender-sensitive decisions on cases of violence against women." This, in the light of what the organizers have called "the continuing practice of many judges and prosecutors to perpetuate in their decisions the misconceptions and biases against women who are victims of violence."

Named "Outstanding Judge" was Judge Ma. Nimfa Penaco-Sitaca of the regional trial court of Misamis Occidental whose decisions, according to the jurors, are "concise, lyrically written and to the point." She makes her pronouncements "with a clarity that is rare in the courts, doing away with pretentious legalese and unnecessary verbiage," the citation says. "Most of all, her decisions betray a keen understanding of human nature and an unerring sense of what is right and what is wrong. They show compassion, especially for sexually abused young women, and a determination to make sure that justice is done to them and their wrongdoers get what they deserve."

What would Judge Penaco-Sitaca have to say on the Martel case? I wonder.

* * *

OTHER awardees are: Cliffon U. Ganay and Eloida Patricia R. de Leon-Diaz from Luzon; Edgar G. Garvilles from the Visayas; Jacob T. Malik from Mindanao; and Teodoro A. Bay from the National Capital Region. A special award is also being given to Bensaudi Arabani, Sr. of the Shari'a Court in Mindanao and two "novelty awards" to Anthony E. Santos and Edgardo L. delos Santos. Chief Justice Hilario Davide will be the keynote speaker in tomorrow's ceremonies.

Aside from the NCRFW and the UP-CWS, other organizations behind the Awards are the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem), the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme and other UN agencies, as well as the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, the Philippine Bar Association, the Legal Advocates for Women Network, the Zonta Club of Metro Pasig, the Davao Lady Lawyers Association, the Asian Center for Women's Human Rights, Law Inc., the Pilipina Legal Resource Center, Sentro ng Alternatibong Lingap Panlegal, and Bantay Katarungan.

Pinky's 'Sandalwood'

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

ASSUMPTION being a small school in those days, unlike the behemoths that pass as educational institutions today, it was possible for the nuns to ensure active participation in music whether you had any musical talent or not. (Those of us who didn't stood behind and mouthed the words.) Even the tone deaf among us could be lulled by the chanting of the nuns' Office, ensuring that we forever would be familiar with Gregorian chants. Since most of the school day was passed in "perfect silence" (real torture for those of us who loved to talk, but illusory: any number getting regularly reported in the Observations Notebook as incapable of shutting up). This silence was usually broken by the sound of some musical rehearsal. The little "nunnies," as I heard Maribel Garcia and Tessie Daza call them, apparently believed in music and our involvement.

It turns out that Victorian as I considered them, research now suggests that classical music has a soothing effect, calming both the insane and new born fighting the trauma of life outside the womb. We are also aware that the experience of those early years is the key to the way we think, learn and relate to others. (So if you want to blame anyone you can try the nuns aside from your parents, of course.)

It was really Carmen "Pinky" Valdes' older sister, Geraldine (another over-achieving Ph.D. at the University of California at Berkeley), who was a friend and sometime classmate. It must have been in that family of seven sisters and one brother (a surprising size even for that time) where the seeds of this musical talent was nurtured first since I can still remember Pinky with her guitar. But all that musical training in school must also have had its effect on Pinky who was to become Sister Jude at the Assumption and later leave to become Pinky again.

Even going back to early Greek tragedies, music has been associated with drama. It is not surprising then that Pinky's CD, "Sandalwood," would deal with the subjects of pain and redemption or, if you prefer, redemption through suffering equals hope. The title and lead song comes from an old Persian proverb (Spain was after all under the Moors for 800 years) that says, "Be like the sandalwood which perfumes the ax that wounds it." Possibly this is the most compelling song in the collection with the powerful image of the sandalwood. The lyrics state that "true love is born in a broken heart" and "If the love is real/ and the heart is pure/ It is giving from the start/ Like the Sandalwood."

Amazingly prolific, of the 13 songs, 7 carry Pinky's words and music. With the exception "Esperanza," all the lyrics are her composition. You may even have heard "Reach out for a Friend" before, sung by Leah Navarro after the 1986 Edsa Revolution that avows: "Reach out for a friend,/ reach out for a moment,/ Let somebody touch your heart and you're free/ Reach out for a friend,/ reach out for a moment/ Whenever you need a hand,/ reach out for me." That's Pinky for you.

Loudette Zaragoza Banzon's voice sounds like a lilting bell in the wilderness in "Lord, You are my Shepherd," and this theme of hope is again communicated in the image of the broken "Alleluia" in the song of the same title, another compelling hymn sung by Joey Albert. The song evokes the sadness felt for those who are lost as well as the hope that God will mend the broken alleluias in our songs and in our lives.

Cicy Campbell's contribution rings bluesy in the mildly dissonant theme of Psalm 46 that certainly is influenced by black Spirituals, both in the arrangement of Norman Landsberg and Cicy's rendition. Whatever "dark night" Pinky has gone through, you can feel both the love and innocence that run through her lyrics.

It is not surprising either that Pinky, being an ex-nun and now a Ph.D in Theology, should have a real and heightened relationship with God. The CD is unabashedly spiritual and inspirational although this is not a Gospel record. Pinky says that she wanted to give a gift to the Filipino people, a message of hope to lighten what appears to be a dark tunnel in our history and that the light at the end isn't an incoming train.

The task facing Pinky in production was quite daunting. She attributes the inspiration for its creation to God but voiced her concern to Him that the budget was too small. It was God she tells us who brought together four "fabulous" voices: Joey Albert, Cicy Campbell, Marilen Liwag Reambillo, Loudette Zaragoza Banzon, all former students of Pinky's at the Assumption. There were also so many others who helped, all for free: Cocoy Laurel, Nini Diaz, Norman Landsberg, Socorro de Castro, Ceres Jacinto and so on.

As you know, with God there are no obstacles. Redemption and salvation are major themes explored through love and most star a guy named God. These are simple songs with beautiful, sometimes poetic expressions of faith set to them. A superb collage of 12 tunes, it is an album that reflects Pinky's and the cast's faith. You may find yourself tapping and then again there may be some tears when the lyrics speak of a familiar experience.

Tonight you can listen to it live at Manila Pen's ballroom. The proceeds go to Chosen Children, Tahanan Walang Hagdanan and Assumption, Bukidnon.

Letter to a friend

YOUNG BLOOD

John Wilfred Sasuya

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

DEAR Mike,

How's your work there in Tokyo?

I have finished my course finally but I am starting another chapter of my student life. I am leaving soon for my graduate studies in Singapore.

Life in the Philippines is the same, full of suffering. But people are optimistic that life will get better in the coming days. After the hotly contested national elections last May, our politicians remain politicians—and they are the traditional ones. There are new debates about constitutional amendments. These politicians—the newly elected, the reelected and the losers who claim to have been cheated, are not bothered by the many problems that should be addressed first. There are more urgent national needs than changing the Constitution, which will only serve their selfish political purposes and ambitions. The nation's coffers are empty and the budget deficit is skyrocketing. Our external debt has reached a historic high. Our enormous social problems are not being given much attention by our government. The number of our people living below the poverty line continues to increase. Our unemployment rate stands at a very high at 11 percent.

I would like acknowledge the efforts of President Gloria Arroyo and her economic team in creating 1.4 million jobs last year. But then the number of new jobs created was easily outpaced by the number of people who were looking for work and whose ranks swelled further with new graduates last March and April. Because of the population explosion, a greater number of young men and women are now entering the labor force, many of them unskilled, school drop-outs.

The government has no concrete plans for solving these old problems. Probably this is the reason we are losing our best minds to foreign countries. Most of our skilled workers prefer to work abroad on account of the higher salaries they get.

I am sure you have heard about the Filipino driver who was taken hostage in Iraq. Our relations with many Western countries have been strained by the government's decision to pull out our troops from Iraq to save his life. See how Filipinos put their lives at risk just to earn money? Anyway, the President has promised to create at least a million jobs every year. And I am very optimistic that she will be able to fulfill that pledge.

Mike, I know that you are aware of the many problems facing our country. That is why I am appeal to you once more to come back and help build our nation. I know that you are one of the most brilliant Filipino scholars in Japan. I felt sad when when you decided to work for a British-owned company after obtaining your master's in chemical engineering from the University of Tokyo, the most prestigious in Asia.

I can still remember that you told me, when I was still an international exchange student at the University of Tokyo, that you would prefer not to work in the Philippines, much less in the government. That was the time when I also told you that I was looking forward to growing old working for our government.

You dismissed me then as being too idealistic and told me I did not know the real world. First, there was no opportunity to develop ourselves to the fullest while working for the government. Second, the bureaucracy and out rotten system would just swallow us. And most of all, there was no money and prestige in working for the government.

But, Mike, I believe these are the very reasons you should come back. No, there is no money and prestige but that should not hinder us from helping reform the old bureaucratic system. And I believed that being scholars, we can stand up and resist the temptation to perpetuate the system.

Our good friend Richelle has established a computer business. She put it up after her graduate studies in the Tokyo University. I salute her for coming back and seeing good opportunities in the Philippines. I hope that there are thousands of other young men and women out there who are like her—optimistic, courageous and determined to succeed in their homeland.

These are also my hopes for thousands of Filipino scholars enrolled in foreign educational institutions. Mike, our Department of Science and Technology will be an effective vehicle for you to achieve and develop your full potential while you're helping in nation-building. True, this will not be financially rewarding but I know that you will find other rewards that money can't give.

On our graduation last April, Prof. Josette Biyo delivered the commencement address. She is a teacher in the rural campus of the Philippine Science High School in Iloilo. She holds a doctorate in biology but earns less than $300 a month—a very meager income compared to what she could earn if she chose to work abroad like you. Her selfless dedication to teaching and human development made her a winner of the Intel Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award. Not only that she has been honored by having a minor planet between Mars and Jupiter named after her by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Tonight search the skies of Tokyo for Planet Biyo!

"A lot of things still have to be done for our country," Professor Biyo said in her speech. "In many ways, my generation and past generations have failed to do these for you." She mentioned their inability to thwart corruption in government, manage our resources properly and develop analytical and critical minds that are responsive to the call of the times.

Mike, these were the challenges of the past that we should face and confront now. Please remember we have a higher obligation than achieving our personal goal of amassing material wealth.

Professor Biyo said, "I have decided to stay in our country because opening the minds of Filipino children and touching their hearts give me contentment which money could not buy." Mike, this is our calling. Not only because we are scholars, but because we have responsibilities to our people who did not get the same chances as we. To whom much is given, much is expected.

Even as I travel farther on the road of learning, I am determined to come back to my homeland, firmly convinced that someday this impoverished nation—our nation, the source of our life and identity—will in time join the ranks of industrialized counties. I have no doubt that we will become world-class. But as Professor Biyo put it, "Being world-class doesn't mean going international and showing our best. Being world-class is giving our best to our country and our people."

Mike, I hope that you will share my thoughts with Rex, Albert, Pilar, Kris and the other Filipino scholars there.

John Wilfred Sasuya, 22, is a graduate of the University of the Philippines. He also studied at the University of Tokyo as an international exchange student. He is now starting his graduate studies at the National University of Singapore.

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Clash of values

IN HIS latest column, Randy David succinctly expressed the problem of values education (PDI, 8/08/04). Like most peoples, Filipinos have two sets of values: One they proclaim, the other they practice.

These two sets of values are not congruent; in fact they are often contradictory. The values proclaimed are rarely practiced, while those practiced are seldom proclaimed. The former are well known and require no tuition, but the latter are often unrecognized or denied. It is these latter values that require articulation in order to determine their suitability in a modern democracy. But first they must be identified and assessed.

Take the example of vote buying. No politician will publicly advocate the manipulation of elections or the buying of votes. But many politicians will not hesitate to engage in some or all of these strategies in order to win. The proclaimed values support clean and fair elections, but the values of practice dictate that in order to win one must engage in improper actions, if only because one's opponents are likely to do so. Filipino voters are aware of this incongruence and have behaved accordingly.

Another example is marital fidelity. The law and most public institutions uphold this value, but many Filipino men regularly contravene it, often with the approval of their peers. This practice indicates that marital infidelity is also valued, at least by men.

No amount of values education will work unless one first finds out the reason why proclaimed values are rarely practiced. Such an investigation could reveal that other values that effectively contravene the proclaimed ones may be at work. One would then have to decide which values are more important or desirable before devising strategies for their inculcation.

This is why, following David, it is not very useful to ask people who are mainly concerned with proclaimed values (e.g. moralists) without first identifying the conditions why these values are not practiced. Values education must be preceded by a sociological examination of their conditions of practice.

—RAUL PERTIERRA,
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Disappointing 'vanguards' of consumer rights

AS A SIMPLE electricity consumer, may I throw in some thoughts on the decision of the Court of Appeals annulling the Energy Regulatory Commission's decision to approve Meralco's unbundled rates.

Contrary to the claim of Meralco's chief operating officer Jesus Francisco that the annulment will further burden the poorest of the poor, I think the reverse is true. Before the unbundling, consumers using 301 kilowatthour and above were billed P3.40 as fixed rate + PPA + CERA as variable rates. Now we are being billed P6.2562 + P5 retail customer charge for metering + CERA + Franchise Tax + Universal Charges and other charges.

When Energy Secretary Vincent Perez urged "the courts to stop interfering with the ERC," he was actually "obstructing" a legal process. The CA was dragged into the case not on its own initiative but as a matter of duty, after aggrieved consumers appealed the ERC decision to the CA. The CA hearings involving all the concerned parties showed that the court never made its "own unilateral pronouncements" but that in fact it acted fairly.

Alas, even "consumer watchdog" Raul Concepcion stepped into the picture and described the CA decision as a "nightmare" to the business community. How can the CA ruling be a "nightmare" to the business community? The ERC decision approving Meralco's unbundling petition, which CA reversed, resulted in increased rates. The erstwhile consumerist hero has turned his back on the consumer, and thus he showed his true color. I think Concepcion ought to wake up from his sleep and face the real issues.

While respecting the opinions of other people, we feel that the opinions of Secretary Perez and Concepcion on the CA decision were totally disappointing. The supposed vanguards of consumer rights are apparently inclined to protect the "other" side. Who can we turn to?

—DONG MARAYA
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Role model

THE OLYMPICS is truly a world event worth celebrating. It is especially exciting from the point of view of an athlete. However, it is my regret as an archer that very little attention is given to archery. Due to this, on behalf of our archery club, I am wishing archer Jasmin Figueroa all the luck in the Athens Olympics. May she truly shine, as she already is a role model to us, aspiring archers in the Philippines.

—CAREN CARLOS,
asucachan@yahoo.com

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Close and clean up the Navotas dumpsite now

HAVE the Obandeños agreed to the use of "deodorant" to treat the stink from the Navotas Controlled Disposal Facility? Some news reports in recent weeks suggested so. We clarify:

The Obando People's Alliance Against Dumpsite (Oppose Dumpsite), a coalition of various groups and individuals belonging to different sectors of Obando, remains steadfast in our stand—close and clean up the site/facility. The alliance, headed by the environmental group SIning YAPak (Siyap) and the fisherfolks group Pamalakaya-Bulakan, is not going to settle for anything less.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Navotas authorities (and Philippine Ecology Corp., too) focus on the odor—or the horseflies that breed on the dumpsite. (We actually believe that the facility breeds, more than anything else, "crocodiles" who love the smell of money coming from each approaching barge of tons of unsorted wastes from the National Capital Region). Not that the reek from the so-called controlled dumpsite is not a problem. But the dumpsite also pollutes the surrounding waters; it is set on a flood-prone area surrounded by several bodies of water. The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, in fact, recommended the dumpsite's closure sometime in September last year; even so, the DENR chooses not to listen until now.

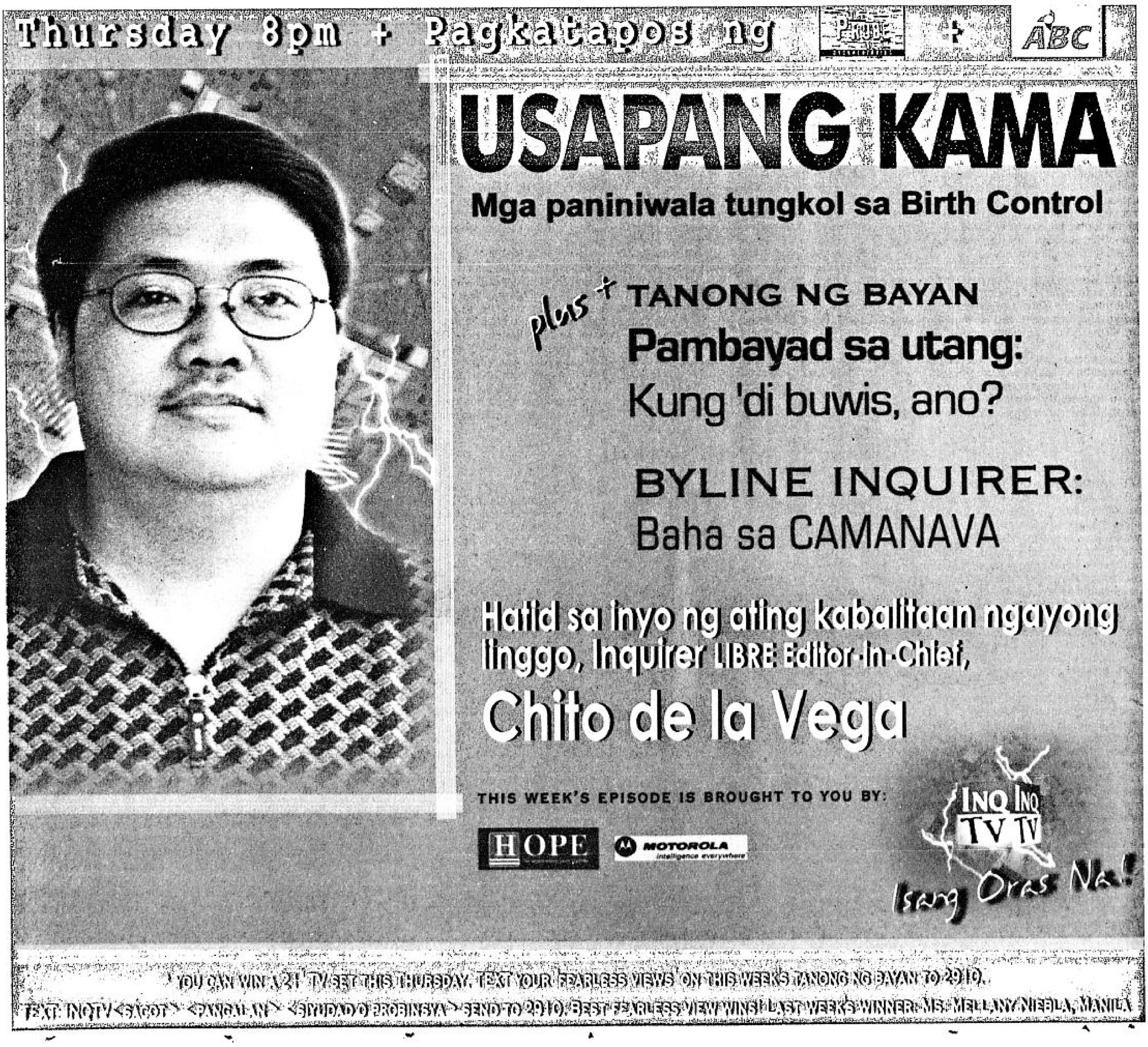
The recent water sampling and analysis would like to make us believe that, somehow, as if by some miraculous act, the waters have undergone a complete recovery. We would like to believe this—had the sample not been taken in a month of tides and rains. They should have taken fish and soil samples as well for accuracy—and brought a disinterested party to their laboratory, too.

Anyway, even without the aid of the microscope, it's not hard to see the harmful effects of the dumpsite on the surrounding environment and communities. Fisherfolks, especially, have felt the adverse impact of the facility on their harvests, which have dwindled from what used to be bountiful to a literal handful.

If that's not convincing enough, then listen to the sustained public outcries from Obando and elsewhere, condemning the operation of the dumpsite. They bring to the fore the utter insensitivity of the authorities to the plight of the communities directly and adversely affected by the operation of the dumpsite. There is an evident violation of our constitutional right to live in a healthy and safe environment.

What are we supposed to do now? We've said it. We've shouted it to the whole world! We'll say and shout it once more: We want the Navotas dumpsite closed and cleaned up. Now!

—REY K. PALACIO
executive director, SIYAP
chair, OPPOSE DUMPSITE
118 San Pascual,
Obando, Bulacan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Cops rescue kidnapped Bulacan couple

MARILAO, Bulacan—Police here rescued a couple on Sunday night about two hours after two armed men abducted them in Barangay Saluysoy in Meycauayan town.

Supt. Arnold Gunnacao, Bulacan police intelligence and investigation chief, said they arrested two suspects identified as Delfin Santos and Antonio Ong. A third suspect escaped.

Police said George Malumo and his live-in partner Maricel Pascual, who were engaged in ready-to-wear (RTW) business, were about to meet a customer at 11:30 p.m. Sunday in Barangay Saluysoy when Santos and Ong held them at gunpoint.

Armed with .45 and 9 mm caliber pistols, the suspects dragged the victims to a Toyota Corolla, according to Supt. Pepito Pacada, Marilao police chief.

The suspects then drove the couple around this town and in Meycauayan while a man riding in a motorcycle tailed them.

The suspects demanded P40,000 from the couple. They later freed Malumo to raise the money. They told him to meet them in front of a burger station in Barangay Tabing Ilog here at 1 a.m.

But Malumo immediately sought the help of the police that set up an entrapment operation.

Kidnappings continue to hound the business community, especially Filipino-Chinese businessmen, despite recent pronouncements by the government of successes in the anti-kidnapping campaign.

In Cotabato City, Filipino-Chinese traders rejected a proposal by the opposition-dominated Sangguniang Panlungsod to add more law enforcers by requesting for more soldiers to be deployed.

The proposal came in the wake of the reported rise in criminality.

The rising crime rate was the topic of a meeting of the City Peace and Order Council (CPOC), which was called by Mayor Muslimin Sema.

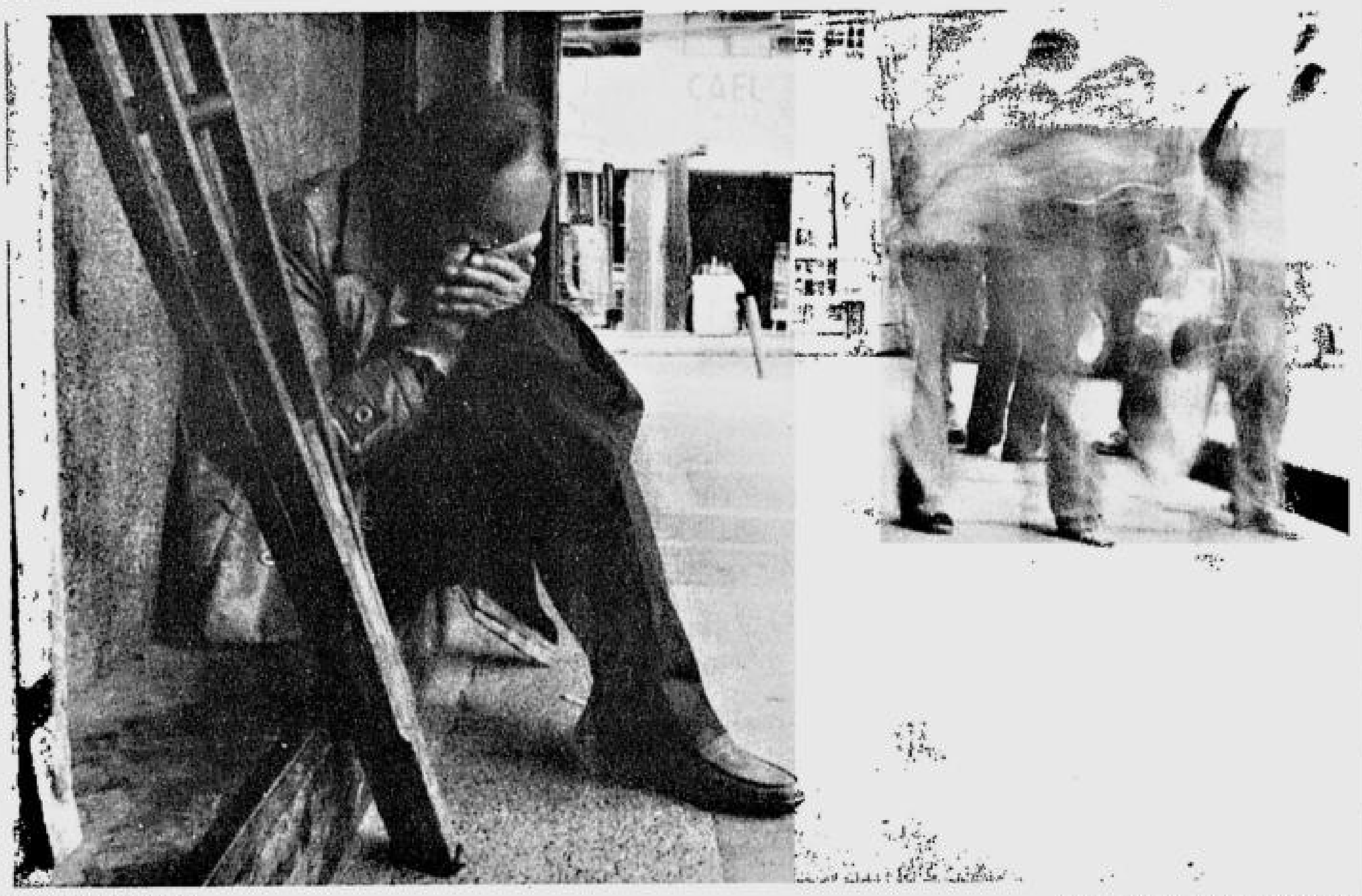
But during the council meeting, Filipino-Chinese traders said what the city needs is citizens' cooperation.

"Crime prevention is what we need, because prevention is better than cure," said one Filipino-Chinese trader.

Sema said additional forces should come from fresh recruitment for the city police and not from the military.

"Do they not trust our local police and the presence of the (Army's) Task Group Kutawato?" said Sema of the proposal of opposition Councilor Orlando Badoy to add more policemen.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk with a report from Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau



DESPONDENT

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A man oblivious to passersby rests in a building wall in Baguio City after wandering in the summer capital's streets in crutches.

CBCP head says Church opposition to same-sex union not antifeminist

CEBU CITY—Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla wants to hold a dialogue with Party-list Rep. Ana Theresia Hontiveros-Baraquel (Akbayan) to clarify a Church document, which the congressman tagged as "antifeminist."

Capalla, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines president, said the "Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women," merely explained the delineation of the role of men and women and to reiterate the opposition of Church to same-sex marriages.

"I think they have not read the whole document and they already made statements about it. They said that the Vatican is against the women when actually it was about the equality of sexes," Capalla told the Inquirer on Saturday afternoon after attending the episcopal ordination of Pagadian Bishop Emmanuel Cabajar.

He said about 30 women held a rally last week at the CBCP office in Manila to protest the contents of the letter.

"There was a rally that was staged last week by 30 women against the statement that they have not read and then they insulted the bishops and the priests with (what was written) on their placards. It was terrible," said Capalla.

When reached for comment, Baraquel said she was not able to attend the rally but she was willing to meet the archbishop and talk about the letter.

She, however, took exception to Capalla's remark that the women's group might not have read the entire letter.

She said her group had downloaded the letter from the Internet and read it several times.

"No self-respecting person would make a statement like I did during my privilege speech without reading it several times," she said.

The letter was written by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and was approved and ordered published by Pope John Paul II on May 31, 2004.

In a privilege speech last Aug. 9, Baraquel criticized the letter, which she said claimed that the feminist movement emphasized the subordination of women to men in order to fuel the antagonism between the two sexes.

She added the letter falsely stated that feminism had espoused the liberation of women lay in criticizing the Sacred Scripture and the patriarchal conception of God was false.

"No feminist debates the fact that Jesus was born a man. Instead, we Catholic feminists cherish Jesus Christ as a feminist man and a sign of the feminine principle in God," she earlier said.

But Capalla said the letter merely talked about "equality that does not erase the differences between a man and a woman."

"The Vatican is worried about the emerging culture on gay marriages, woman and woman relationships, that defeats the purpose of God that he has created man and woman, " he added.

Bernadette Parco, PDI Visayas Bureau

Army sends 2 choppers to bomb Abu Sayyaf lairs

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The military has sent two attack helicopters to the Carawan Complex in Indanan, Sulu to flush out at least 60 Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"We are just waiting for our troops to finish their clearing operation, and then we will drop bombs on these bandits to flush them all (out of) their hiding (sic) lairs," Brig. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, Task Force Comet commander, said.

A soldier was killed while six others were wounded in an encounter with Abu Sayyaf bandits in Indanan town on Sunday morning.

Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga said the bandit group, led by Gumbahali Jumdail alias Commander Abu, also suffered some casualties.

Habacon said government soldiers have already started firing mortars at the bandits' location.

"We are planning to do the same or with semblance to what killed Tahir Alonto in Central Mindanao (sic)," Habacon said.

Alonto, leader of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang, was reportedly killed when the military launched air strikes on his alleged lair in Maguindanao on Friday.

Habacon said on the government side, killed in the Indanan clash was Pfc. Hasirin Asis.

The military is not just battling the bandits, but reports as well of corruption in its dealings with the Abu Sayyaf, a group with links to international terrorist organizations.

While former Sayyaf hostage Gracia Burnham was quoted by the military as having cleared soldiers of collusion or of taking part of ransom paid for the bandits' captives, there was no clear testimony of Burnham having said the military had not dipped its hands into the ransom payment. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Cop hurt in Cebu ambush after testimony in court

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A policeman was wounded in an ambush staged by five men in Barangay Calamba at about 11:58 a.m. yesterday, shortly after he testified in court on a drug-related case.

PO3 Francisco Balansag, an operative of the San Nicolas Police Precinct, suffered two gunshot wounds in the right arm and left side of the body. He was brought to nearby Miller Sanitarium Hospital and was declared out of danger.

A civilian identified as Ched Ryan was hit by a stray bullet in the left buttock. He was rushed to the Cebu City Medical Center.

About an hour later, members of the Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Bureau (CIIB) arrested one of the suspects in Talisay City, about 12 kilometers south of here.

John Muhammad Reyes, 28, was detained at the Cebu City Police Office detention cell pending filing of charges.

Ongoing operations

Supt. Melvin Gayotin, Cebu City acting police chief, said they already had the identity of the other suspects but he refused to divulge them, as it might jeopardize ongoing operations.

Among the possible motives of the ambush was Balansag's active involvement and accomplishments in the antidrug campaign, he said.

Balansag was on board his motorcycle and was on his way back to the police station after giving his testimony as a witness against a drug suspect at the Palace of Justice.

When interviewed by reporters in the hospital, the policeman refused also to give details on the case although he admitted that he arrested the accused in Barangay Calamba.

Balansag said the five men on board two motorcycles suddenly appeared when he reached the corner of Natalio Bacalso and V. Rama Streets.

Ambush positions

One motorcycle, with two suspects on board, was on his right while the other motorcycle ridden by three suspects was behind him.

The suspects, armed with shotguns, then fired at him. But Balansag was able to draw his .38 cal. service firearm and shot at the suspects alongside him.

The motorcycle crashed but the suspects managed to run and escape. Their companion, however, drove toward Katipunan Street in Barangay Labangon.

Supt. Paul Labra, CIIB chief, said they traced the ownership of the motorcycle to one Bethany Monte of Barangay Bulacao, Talisay.

When they went to her house, he added, they found Reyes there. The suspect was positively identified by Balansag as the passenger of the motorcycle that was speeding alongside him.

Pampanga capital celebrates centennial, survival

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—If the cities of Pompei and Herculaneum in Italy tell the world how places lose their grandeur from the eruptions of Mt. Visuvius, this Pampanga capital city can tell how it is to rebuild from Mt. Pinatubo's blasts and lahar.

That contribution became a central theme when the City of San Fernando on Monday turned 250 years old as a city and 100 years old on Sunday as the seat of the capital of Pampanga.

During ceremonies reenacting the two events, Mayor Oscar Rodriguez, local officials and private sector leaders took turns looking back at how the residents of San Fernando rebuilt the city to defend its historical and cultural heritage and some P100 billion in investments, private and public properties as well the lives of less than 300,000 residents.

The volcano, 30 kilometers west of here, blew its top on June 15, 1991, made secondary explosions in the next 12 months, disgorged more mud, sand and stones that flowed from the mountain flanks during heavy rains.

As government announced plans to abandon the city, residents spilled to the streets, demanding to save San Fernando. The 56-km FVR Megadike rose. But because the antilahar structure was not enough, residents especially traders pitched in to build smaller dikes around San Fernando.

"To date, the city is fully back on its feet, attesting that the disaster did not spell a death knell to us," Rodriguez said.

As San Fernando wrestled against the tragedy, it also saved the Pampanga capitol, allowing the provincial government to perform normal work amid the catastrophe that ravaged all four districts, especially the third, of the province.

The provincial capitol was transferred from Bacolor to San Fernando in 1904 through the Philippine Commission Act of 1204. The late Gov. Macario Arnedo pushed the transfer of the seat of government in anticipation of the construction of the railroad station in San Fernando.

Arnedo's move proved right for the town boomed and became the commercial district of Central Luzon.

"For its many local, regional and national significance, San Fernando has to get on and refuse the death poised by Pinatubo," Rodriguez said.

The 6,774-hectare city, hailed by the Asian Institute of Management as one of the 10 most competitive cities in the country, is now also at the center of Global Gateways of the fusion of infrastructures connecting Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, Subic Bay Freeport in Zambales and Luisita Industrial Park in Tarlac.

Town struck by whirlwind put in state of calamity

By Carla Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The town of Hinobaan yesterday was declared under a state of calamity after whirlwind destroyed eight houses and floods rendered its roads impassable on Saturday afternoon.

The declaration would pave the way for the release of calamity funds to be used to repair roads damaged by the floods and to help the 10 families whose homes were destroyed.

The whirlwind hit Barangays Asia and Alim at about 5 p.m. on Saturday, destroying eight houses and damaging two others, said Melvin Fierro of the provincial disaster management team.

He said reports from Hinobaan said the twister blew off the roof of the Alim barangay gymnasium, uprooted trees and destroyed rice crops.

Mayor Francisco Bilbao of Hinobaan said heavy rains on Saturday had rendered roads impassable, stopping public transportation from passing through the town to get to the neighboring city of Bayawan in Negros Oriental.

Flash floods also left rocks on the highway at Sitio Palasanon in the same village.

Floods reached the Barangay Asia Bridge in Barangay Culipapa, the mayor said.

Fierro said the bad weather was triggered by a tropical depression which was then approaching the Visayas on Saturday.

The management team warned fishermen against risking their lives by going out to sea, and for people living near rivers and the seashores to take precautions against rising waters.

The weather advisory released by the Philippines Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services yesterday showed that tropical depression "Lawin" was estimated at 1,090 kilometers east southeast of Basco, Batanes with strongest sustained winds of 55 km per hour (kph) near the center. It was forecast to move west at 17 kph.

Bounty Fresh Chicken

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In the recently concluded 1st National Shoppers' Choice Awards held at the Hotel Dusit Nikko Hotel in Makati City, Bounty Fresh Chicken bagged the first prize in the Fresh Chicken National Level Category. The criteria were based on excellence in product quality, company reputation, brand recognition, and consumer services. Organized by the Asia-Pacific Shopper's Choice Institute and in partnership with Shoppers' Choice Magazine, Essence [illegible] and the [illegible] the awarding ceremony aimed to empower the Filipino consumers and recognize their contribution to the national economy.

> helping the country's efforts in food security by producing affordable, high quality and readily available poultry products

Bounty Fresh Chicken is proudly distributed by **Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc.** and **Tyson Agro Ventures, Inc.**, who have been helping the country's efforts in food security by producing affordable, high quality and readily available poultry products.

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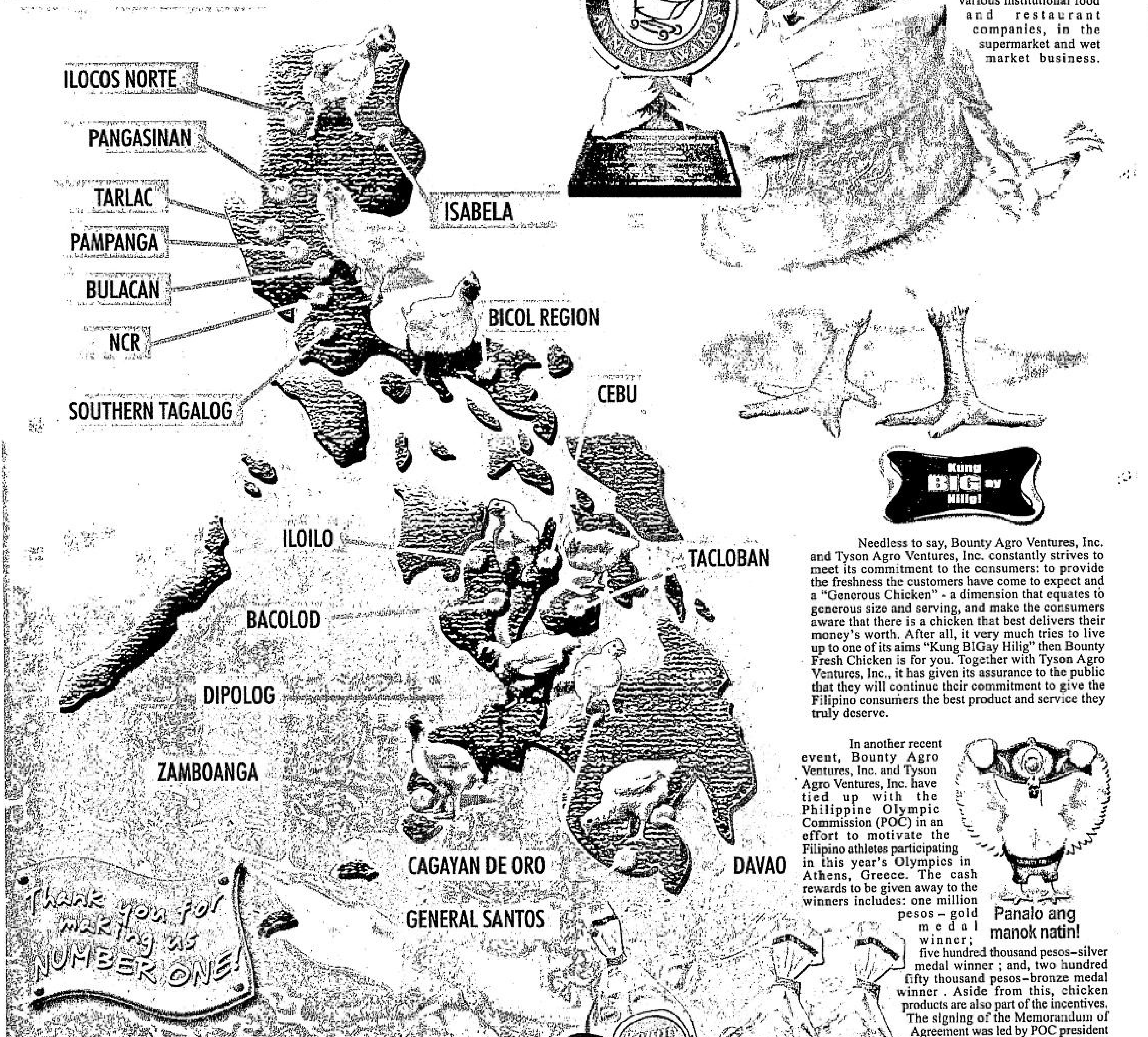
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In another recent event, Bounty Agro Ventures, Inc. and Tyson Agro Ventures, Inc. have tied up with the Philippine Olympic Commission (POC) in an effort to motivate the Filipino athletes participating in this year's Olympics in Athens, Greece. The cash rewards to be given away to the winners includes: one million pesos – gold medal winner; five hundred thousand pesos–silver medal winner ; and, two hundred fifty thousand pesos–bronze medal winner . Aside from this, chicken products are also part of the incentives. The signing of the Memorandum of Agreement was led by POC president Celso Dayrit and Bounty Agro Ventures' president and general manager Ronald Mascariñas.

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(In exact order)

MEGALOTTO 6/45 15 26 33 36 38 41

Cab riders, ready that extra P5 and more

By Clarissa S. Batino

WHEN fare and oil prices rain, it pours.

If the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board approves a fare increase petition from taxi operators and drivers, commuters would be charged P5 more for the flag down from the current P25, and 50 centavos extra for each succeeding distance from the current P2.

LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista said the petition had been submitted to the board for resolution.

Felix Racadio, LFTRB board member, said that a decision would be out by the end of the month or early September.

"We no longer invoke the 90-day waiting period because we understand the plight of the taxi drivers and operators," he added.

The regulatory board would also no longer wait for the position paper of the Solicitor General as it had already opposed the earlier fare hikes. The LTFRB allowed jeeps and buses to increase minimum fares by P1.50 and P2 starting June 12.

Last month, the Association of Taxi Operators and Drivers in Metro Manila (Atomm) filed a new petition for an increase in the flag down to P30 from P25. The flag down covers the fare for the first 500 meters.

The taxi group also asked that the rates for the 250 succeeding meters be raised to P2.50, and P2 for every minute of waiting time. Currently, taxis impose an additional charge of P2 for every 300 succeeding meters, and P1 for every minute of waiting time.

Atomm first filed its application for fare increase last March, but the LTFRB declared the petition defective since it was the same request filed years ago. The earlier petition was for a P15 increase in the flag down.

"Apart from the fact that the petition was declared defective because it was a rehash, the petitioner also failed to show up during the hearings. We asked them to file another petition, and they did last month," Racadio said.

He added: "The OSG position paper is not evidence. It is merely a summary of the government lawyers' position, representing the riding public, arguments and facts related to the case. We already noted the OSG's position when it earlier filed an opposition."

Atomm president Leonora Naval said her group needed to adjust taxi fares to recover from the continued rise in fuel prices that have now gone up by more than 100 percent since taxi fares were last adjusted in December 2000. At that time, the flag down went up by P5 from P20.

Gas then cost only about P13 per liter, against the average price of P30 today.

Pasig siege suspects face raps

By Christian V. Esguerra

SUSPECTED members of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. who turned an abandoned compound in Pasig into a virtual war zone on Sunday are now facing charges of assault, frustrated homicide and illegal possession of firearms.

Police said the group used an attack helicopter and an armored personnel carrier, on top of at least 50 fully armed officers to subdue the group of Bernardito Balaga, Ediberto Bestil, Edito Mahinay, Romer Balorio, Manolo Eva, Juanito Casanova, Rey Sarmiento, Francisco Sedigo and Crisanto Escuandro.

Open defiance

"We will not tolerate such open defiance of the law," Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes told reporters after presenting the suspects to the media yesterday. "We will find out about the people behind them and the extent of their organization."

Fighting erupted when Balaga's group fired at members of the Pasig police who had gone to Phoenix Steel Corp. Compound in Barangay Manggahan to check on the presence of armed men there at around 11:30 a.m.

Same group

Police said security guards had complained that the same group had shot them while they were patrolling the area the day before.

Wounded in the initial attack was security guard Joseph Resotas.

The group, composed of former military trainees, had fortified the compound with sandbags and foxholes, said Director Ricardo de Leon, National Capital Region Police Office chief.

Seized from the group were two M-16 rifles, an air gun, a radio, and a backpack.

A FAMILY finds comfort in lives saved and meager possessions recovered from a fire that razed more than a hundred squatter shanties Sunday along Agham Road near the Veterans Hospital in Quezon City. BOY CABRIDO

Busy day for firemen in QC, Valenzuela

By Tina Santos and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A TOUGH day for firefighters.

While a big fire raged in Quezon City Sunday evening, another blaze broke out in a folding bed factory in neighboring Valenzuela City about four hours later.

When the six-hour blaze in Quezon City was put out at 2 a.m. yesterday, at least 500 houses inside a 30-hectare squatters' colony in Agham Road, Sitio San Roque, Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, were razed, leaving more than 1,000 families homeless, according to arson investigator FO2 Noel Bernardino.

The fire that burned down the RC Galvez Corp. in Barangay Malinta, Valenzuela City, broke out about 12:30 a.m., just as firefighters were busy trying to put out the fire in Quezon City.

The Quezon City fire was the second to hit the area this year. On May 1, a polio victim was killed, eight people were injured, and more than 4,000 persons lost their homes in the fire.

There were no casualties in the Bagong Pag-asa fire on Sunday.

Arson investigators have yet to determine the cause of the fire, although they said they were looking at the possibility that a leaking LPG tank could have started it.

The Valenzuela City Fire Station had already sent its biggest fire truck to Quezon City when the fire in the bed factory broke out, Valenzuela City Fire chief Efren Yadao told the INQUIRER.

Apart from the city's five firetrucks, volunteers and government firetrucks responded to the fire that gutted the factory owned by Ricardo Galvez Sr.

Raw materials like plastics and foam stored in the factory contributed to the spread of the fire, Yadao added.

Some witnesses said the fire could have started in the workers' quarters.

No one was reported injured but damages were expected to reach at least P5 million, according to Yadao.

Not only a TV anticrime ad for Manny

By Leila B. Salaverria

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday appealed to boxing champion Manny Pacquiao to help convince his former bodyguard, William Bael, to surrender to authorities.

Pacquiao and Wycoco both appeared earlier in a television commercial exhorting the public to help fight crime.

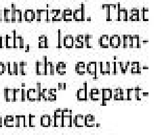
Bael, a former army sergeant, is the main suspect in the killing of Jonathan Abayon, a reporter who died from a single gunshot wound on his right cheek on Aug. 9 in General Santos, Cotabato. Abayon was a reporter of radio station dxB.

At least six journalists of provincial media outfits have been killed this year, four of them in a span of two weeks. *(See related story on Page 1.)*

Gov't-MILF coordination, a fiction

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



THE BOMBING of the Pentagon kidnap gang lair in Liguasan Marsh in Central Mindanao should have been done a long time ago.

But the government held back its big punch because of its ceasefire talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The massive attack on the Pentagon lair resulted in the killing of at least 16 gang members, including possibly its leader, Alonto Tahir.

It's common knowledge that most of Liguasan Marsh is under the control of the MILF. The government was afraid that attacking the Pentagon lair would send the MILF scampering away from the negotiating table.

So, the government and the MILF came up with the fiction that both parties attacked the Pentagon lair. This was made so that the MILF could save face.

You see, everybody in Mindanao knows that the MILF was—and most probably is still—supporting the Pentagon kidnap gang. In military parlance, Pentagon is the MILF's "lost command."

A lost command is supposedly composed of errant members of an armed force whose illegal activities are not authorized. That is, on paper. In truth, a lost command is nothing but the equivalent of the "dirty tricks" department in a government office.

So, now we know what the Pentagon is to the MILF. The MILF's giving the military permission to bomb its lair was to show the world that it doesn't tolerate criminality among its members. In truth, the MILF does because the Pentagon is its money-making group.

The military claims that Alonto Tahir was one of those killed in the attack on Liguasan Marsh. But the MILF says it's not true, that he was only seriously wounded.

To set the record straight, the military should exhume the body of the kidnap gang leader.

But what about the religious and cultural sensibilities of the Muslims since Tahir was (or is) a Muslim? Muslims say they respect their dead.

So do the Christians. The heck with religious or cultural sensibilities since religion has nothing to do with exhuming the body of the bandit leader.

Just because he was Muslim he should not be given special treatment on account of his religion. A bandit is a bandit no matter which religion he belongs to.

* * *

For creating trouble at Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard in Manila, rookie PO1 Michael Robles is facing dismissal from the service and a criminal case.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, after learning about Robles' abusive behavior, ordered everything thrown at Robles, including the kitchen sink.

Baywalk, which is a favorite of thousands of promenaders, is Atienza's "baby."

Robles slapped and poked his gun at two waiters of one of the restaurants on the Baywalk. He was reportedly drunk at the time. He allegedly resented being told by the waiters that they were closing the restaurant since it was already 4 a.m., two hours past closing time.

My program "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" is helping the waiters with the administrative complaint they filed against Robles.

During the "Isumbong"-initiated confrontation between Robles and the waiters at the office of Director Ricardo de Leon, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), the Metro Manila police chief was visibly irked.

De Leon's brainchild is the "Kuya Ko 'To" (This is my elder brother) program which makes every cop in the metropolis a big brother to the ordinary citizen, one to whom everybody can run to.

"How can you expect citizens to run to you for help when you're oppressing them?" the police general told Robles.

LRT bomb suspects mum in court trial

By Tarra V. Quismundo

TWO MEN accused of bombing the Light Rail Transit line in Manila almost four years ago refused to respond in answer to charges of multiple murder, among others, prompting the court to enter a not guilty plea on their behalf.

The Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 29, which had been trying the case against another bombing suspect, Moklis Hadji Yunos, yesterday entered the plea for Mamasa Naga and Abdul Pata, based on court procedure.

The two suspected members of the Jemaah Islamiyah, were caught in Marawi City on Aug. 2.

Uniform traffic code, please

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A UNIFORM traffic code.

This was the appeal yesterday of transport groups, following the implementation of the Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) scheme.

"While we are in full support of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's new project, we are appealing to all local government units with their own traffic codes to adhere to a single ticketing system," Pangkalahatang Sanggunian Manila Suburbs Drivers Association Inc. (Pasang-Masda) president Obet Martin said.

Martin said the MTT scheme would make paying fines more convenient for public utility vehicle drivers.

More difficult

But Makati, Pateros, Malabon, Navotas and Pasig issue their own traffic tickets, making things difficult for PUV drivers, he said.

Under the new system, traffic enforcers would no longer confiscate drivers' licenses.

Instead, they issue an MTT that the erring motorist could redeem in any of Metrobank's 583 branches nationwide.

Martin said that in Makati City, for example, drivers still have to surrender their licenses to local traffic enforcers.

"The drivers also have to deal with Makati's excessive fines," he said, adding that they are planning to bring the single ticketing system issue to court.

Won't budge

Makati Public Safety Department head Hermenigildo San Miguel said they would not abandon their new traffic code for the MMDA scheme.

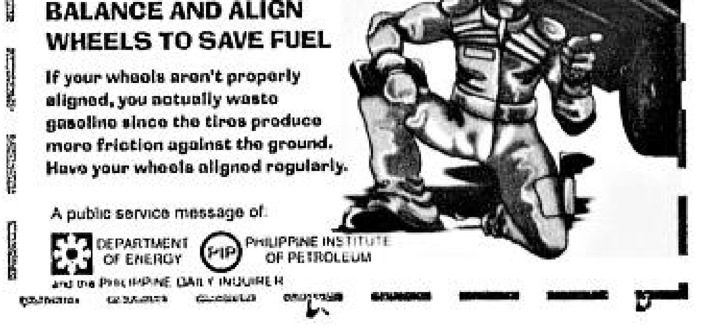
San Miguel said Makati traffic authorities have been issuing Ordinance Violation Receipts since July.

The MMDA has no authority to impose the scheme in Metro Manila since it is only a coordinating agency, San Miguel said.

He added that only local governments have the authority to regulate traffic in their jurisdiction.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, however, said the MMDA charter specifies the implementation of a single ticketing system in the metropolis.

"I am asking the concerned LGUs to stop issuing their own traffic tickets to avoid confusion among motorists," he said.



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TEARS OF JOY
Jasmin Figueroa wipes a tear as her upset of Italy's former world champion Natalia Valeeva sinks in during their archery Round of 64 showdown at the Panathinaiko Stadium in Athens Sunday. AP

Payla eyes 3rd win in a row vs Uzbek

ATHENS—Violito Payla tries to give the Philippines a bright moment in the 28th Olympic Games on Tuesday when he goes up against an opponent that is turning out to be his favorite whipping boy.

The Filipino flyweight climbs the ring with guarded optimism that he would make it three in a row over Uzbekistan's Tulashboy Doniyorov in the first round of the 51-kg division of boxing, the event where the Philippines hopes to break an 80-year gold medal drought.

The fight is scheduled for 8:45 p.m. (1:45 a.m. Wednesday in Manila) at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall.

Payla hopes to follow up on Sunday's victory of light welterweight Romeo Brin over Ugandan-born Patrick Bogere of Sweden following Christopher Camat's loss to Russia's Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov in the middleweight class on Saturday.

The other Filipino fighter here, the highly regarded light flyweight Harry Tañamor, fights Tajikistan's Sherali Dostiev in the first round on Wednesday.

The 25-year-old Payla has beaten Doniyorov twice before—in the Asian Games in Busan, South Korea in 2002 and in the Asian Olympic elimination this year in Puerto Princesa City, where the Filipino took the gold medal that earned him the trip to Athens.

ATHENS 2004

Payla and the other Filipino boxers have refused to be interviewed before and after their fights, and it was former Manila Mayor Gemiliano Lopez Jr., the boxing team leader, who spoke for them.

"Payla is in top condition, but he is not going to be overconfident," said Lopez, whose son Manny inherited from him the presidency of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap).

The younger Lopez has been unable to oversee the team's training and preparation because he is a member of the boxing jury here.

The former Manila mayor said the boxers are "physically and psychologically fit, which is what is most important in this sport."

Payla, he said, is fearless and he shows this to his opponent. "He doesn't stop attacking," he said.

Boxing coach Nolito Velasco also expressed confidence that Payla would whip his opponent again.

"He knows his opponent well," Velasco said. "But all of that means nothing because this is the Olympics. It will be a good fight."

If Payla makes it three straight over Doniyorov, he will meet the winner of the bout between Ron Siler of the United States and Bato-Vankeev of Bulgaria in the round of 16. Expected to wait in ambush in the quarterfinals is Jerome Thomas of France, rated No. 1 in the world.

Two other favorites in the division, Russia's Georgy Balakshin and Thailand's Somjit Jongjojor, are in the upper bracket in the draw, which means Payla, if he goes all the way, won't have to meet any of them until the gold medal round.

Lopez said the quarterfinals is the toughest stage of the boxing compe-

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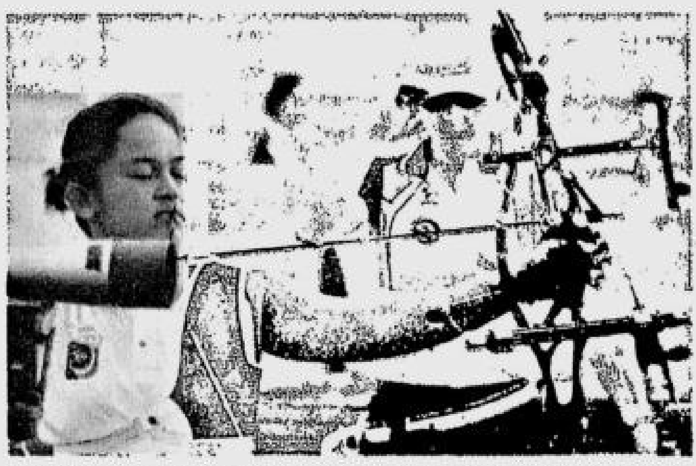

FIGUEROA, almost unmindful of Valeeva (right), concentrates before unleashing her last arrow during the dramatic shootoff. AFP

Singh wins PGA crown
Page A19

Velasco advises boxers to fight it out for glory

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DON'T get carried away by multi-million-peso promises and just slug it out for Olympic glory.

The advice came from Barcelona Olympics bronze winner Roel Velasco, who is still waiting for one unfulfilled promise made 12 years ago.

The 32-year-old Velasco, who reached the light flyweight boxing semifinals in 1992, said he has yet to receive part of the promised windfall for winning the only medal for the country in that Games.

For his feat, he received P1 million from the Quest for Gold program of then Philippine Sports Commission chair Mel Lopez and backed by top Filipino taipans like Lucio Tan and William Gatchalian. The incentive was on top of the P150,000 provided by law and was given through the PSC.

The one "that got away" was a P250,000 reward pledged by the Philippine National Bank headed then by Edgardo Espiritu. Velasco said he no longer expects to receive the money even as he advised the four boxers seeing action in the Athens Games not to lose their focus.

Taekwondo athletes raring to do battle

ATHENS—The Philippines' three taekwondo athletes arrived Monday, tired but anxious to go into action in the Olympic Games here.

Sydney Olympian Donald Geisler, Tshomlee Go and Mary Antoinette Rivero checked in at the Olympic Village at 8:30 a.m. on Monday together with coach Jesus Morales III and foreign mentor Kim Tae Hyung of Korea.

Philippine Taekwondo Association vice president and training director Hong Sung Chon is arriving on Aug. 23, just in time for the competition on Aug. 26-28.

"They are better prepared, physically and mentally, now than in Sydney (Olympics) four years ago," said Morales of his three athletes.

According to Morales, Hong "expects the three to figure in the medals, now that everything is in place.

"They have longer preparations this time and more international exposures," explained Morales. "They also trained for more than two months in Korea."

Juvic opens US bid today

JUVIC Pagunsan arrived in New York on a Friday the 13th, but he believes it's a coincidence that has nothing to do with his golf.

Superstitions are not in Pagunsan's vocabulary, and when the national team star tees off for the 104th US Amateur Championship at the dreaded Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, New York, all he can worry about are the challenges served up by the course, which has hosted two US Opens and is also the venue for the 2006 edition.

Pagunsan plays the east course at 12:24 p.m. Monday (12:24 a.m. Tuesday Manila time) and then at 7:24 a.m. the next day for the 36-hole qualifying rounds, hoping to make the 64-man roster for the tournament proper starting Wednesday.

Just advancing to the main draw would already be a big feat for Juvic since there are 312 international entries vying for the 64 slots.

Jong Arcano

RP SCHEDULE (All times Manila time)

Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2004
ARCHERY Panathinaiko Stadium
(Women's Individual, Round of 32; 4:11 p.m.)
Jasmin Figueroa vs. Almudena Gallardo, Spain
BOXING Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall
(Flyweight, 51 kg., Round of 32; 1:45 a.m. Wednesday)
Violeto Payla vs. Tulashboy Doniyorov
SWIMMING Olympic Aquatic Center
(Men's 200m Breaststroke, Heats; 4:14 p.m.)
Miguel Molina

ATHENS 2004

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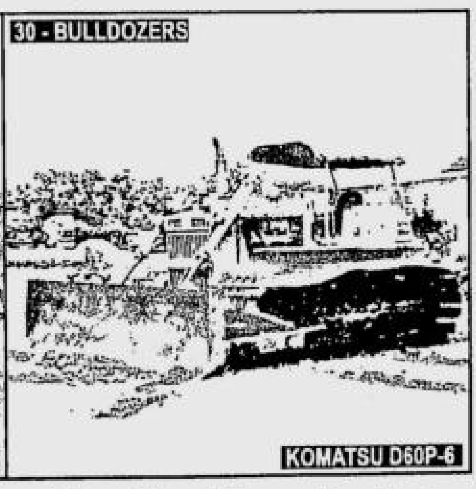

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•GLOBE•
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RP archer on target, beats third best ...

From page A1

It took a moment before she realized what she had achieved, and when it sank in, Jasmin exploded with joy and turned around for a tearful embrace with her coach, Henry Manalang. She won by two points, 132-130.

"I did not expect to win," she said. "All I wanted was to improve on my record (152). If I did that, it was OK for me." Earlier, she had said her target in the Olympics was to surpass the 58th place finish of former national champion Jennifer Chan in the Sydney Olympics.

She did that and more. Now she's in the Round of 32, where the 19-year-old Figueroa will face Spain's Almudena Gallardo on Tuesday. Gallardo advanced by beating Georgia's Khatuna Namidze, 148-132.

What had started as a day of disappointments in the swimming pool and the shooting field ended victorious in the boxing arena and the windswept archery range of Panathinaiko, an imposing structure in the center of the city built in 330 B.C. and rebuilt for the revival of the Games in 1896.

Her triumph came hours after light welterweight Romeo Brin scored a points victory over Sweden's Patrick Bogere at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall and the elimination of Miguel Molina from the men's 200-meter freestyle, Jaclyn Pangilinan from the women's 100-m breaststroke, and Jethro Dionisio from trap shooting.

Filipino officials led by Tourism Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit and Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain cheered from the marble steps of the 23-centuries-old stadium as Figueroa held her own against Valeeva.

"It was a good day for the Philippines," said Philippine team chef de mission Steve Hontiveros.

On Monday, Fil-American swimmer James B. Walsh was the lone Philippine entry in action. As expected, he was eliminated in the only event he was entered, the men's 200-m butterfly.

He clocked two minutes and 6.76 seconds and finished 37th out of 39 starters, 9.4 seconds behind top qualifiers Michael Phelps of the United States, the world record-holder, and Takeshi Yamamoto of Japan.

Walsh, the 17-year-old high schooler from Virginia Beach, Virginia, swam well in second place after the turn for the final 50 meters before fading to fifth place in his heat. His time was more than two seconds off his Olympic qualifying time of 2:04.13.

Figueroa, the 5-foot-2 Philippine women's archery champion, had gained entry into the Olympic competition through the backdoor. She was a wild-card entry called in to fill one of three vacant berths to complete a 64-woman field.

In the ranking round at the Dekila archery range two days before the opening ceremonies, Figueroa had placed 56th.

Valeeva, who ranked 9th in that round, came with impeccable credentials and was expected to send the Filipina packing home after the first round.

The 34-year-old Soviet-born mother had enjoyed one of the most successful careers in modern archery. Now the No. 3 woman archer in the world, she was once No. 1. She won the world championship in 1995 to become the first non-South Korean to do so in nine years.

And she has an Olympic record that is most unique. Now on her fourth Olympiad, Valeeva has competed under three different flags in three previous Games.

In Barcelona in 1992, she won two bronze medals—in the team and individual events—as a member of the Unified Team of former Soviet republics. She then competed for Moldova in 1996 in Atlanta, and following her marriage to an Italian, she became a member of the Italian team in Sydney in 2000.

Nobody told Figueroa whom she was up against, or at least she didn't care.

"My coach told me not to worry about who my opponent was," Figueroa said. "So I just looked straight at the target."

With her back turned against Valeeva, Figueroa immediately fell behind right on the first arrow with the Italian scoring a 10 against her 5.

But she remained undaunted through the first end (three arrows).

The Filipina grabbed the lead when, in the middle of the second end, she hit a 9 and her opponent almost missed the target, scoring just 1. She completed the first nine arrows with a seven-point lead.

At the start of the fourth end, Figueroa completely missed the target while Valeeva hit a 10 for a 10-point swing. Trailing by three, the Filipina quickly regained a one-point lead with a 10 against Valeeva's 6. She padded this lead to six when Valeeva stumbled with a 2 finishing the fourth end.

Seven points down going into the final three arrows, Valeeva made a charge. She hit a 10 and a 9 against Figueroa's two 7s.

Her lead now down to two going into the final arrow, Figueroa said she thought she had lost the match and became philosophical.

"*Sabi ko sa sarili, talagang ganyan ang buhay* (I told myself that's life)," she later said. Needing a seven, she made an eight.

She raised her hands and turned around and what followed was an explosion of joy and tears.

"When I turned around, I saw my coach crying. That's when I started to cry, too," she recalled. Valeeva, too, was in tears when she congratulated her tormentor.

Manalang said the wind blowing across the Panathinaiko was probably a blessing in disguise for Figueroa, who lost her focus in the wind during the ranking round last Wednesday.

He said training in the open field had helped her charge deal with the wind.

"We were a little rattled by the wind. I think the same thing happened to Valeeva," he said.

Manalang said the dramatic entrance of the archers through the tunnel under the stadium added pressure on Figueroa, "but I think the bigger pressure was on Valeeva because she was once No. 1."

The coach said he advised Jasmin to relax for her match against Gallardo on Tuesday and "to just maintain your focus and enjoy" and to always manage a smile as she had done against Valeeva.

"Whatever she shoots during the competition, she always manages to let out a smile," Manalang said. "When the Italian congratulated her after the match, she said, 'I envy you because you always smile.'"

Figueroa became the best performing Filipino archer in the Olympics ever.

The previous highest finisher in archery was Francisco Naranjilla Jr., who was 37th in Munich in 1972.

The other Filipino Olympic archers were Carlos Santos Jr. (50th, Munich), Ramon Aldea (54th, Munich), Basilisa Ygnalaga (49th, Seoul), and Chan (58th, Sydney).

Now assured of 32nd and having gained confidence, Figueroa will be aiming to do even better against another world-rated archer, Gallardo.

JAMES Walsh of the Philippines swims in a qualifying heat of the 200-meter butterfly. AP

SAMSUNG

Payla eyes 3rd ...

From page A17

tition. "If our boxers get past that round, I have a feeling we will make it all the way to the gold," he said.

The brightest prospect for that gold is light flyweight Harry Tañamor, who is rated a bronze medal potential by the US magazine Sports Illustrated.

But, if they run true to form, he is expected to encounter the division's toughest fighter, Yan Barthelemy of Cuba, in the quarterfinals. The other top contender, Russia's Sergey Kazakov, won't be in the radar screen until the final round.

Brin, on the other hand, will encounter a tough foe in Thursday's second round, Manus Boonjumnong of Thailand. But the Filipino has the advantage because he has beaten the Thai before—in the Asian Olympic qualifying tournament in Puerto Princesa last January. Brin also won the gold in that tournament.

If he wins, Brin will battle the victor between Alexander Maletin of Russia and Willy Blain of France.

Artemio T. Engracia Jr.

SPORTSWATCH

Paragua, 2 other RP bets share 2nd

FILIPINO International Masters Mark Paragua and Yves Rañola and NM-candidate Roland Salvador scored 1.5 points from their last two games and gained a share of second place in the 8th Genova Individual International Open Chess Championships yesterday in Genova, Italy. Paragua, Rañola and Salvador tallied 5.5 points each in seven games, trailing Belarusian IM Nikita Maiorov's 6.0 points. Also with 5.5 points were 2001 edition champion GM Erald Dervishi of Albania,GM Miroljub Lazic of Yugoslavia, FM Sergejs Gromovs and FM Flavio Guido of Italy. Paragua drew with IM Nikita Maiorov of Belarus in the sixth round then beat compatriot IM Ronald Bancod to match Rañola's draw with Guido in the sixth and victory over FM Daniele Genocchio of Italy in the seventh. Salvador drew with countryman NM Rolando Nolte in the sixth round, then upset IM Ramon Mateo of Dominican Republic to stay in contention with two rounds to go. Bancod, Mateo and Genocchio were stuck at 4.5 points with Nolte, Filipino IM Joseph Sanchez and seven others. ***NM Marlon Bernardino, Contributor***

Flores, Klimachewski hurdle tennis foes

CATHERINE Flores of De La Salle beat Melody Barraquias, 6-4, 6-3, in the junior women's 21-under division and Germaine Klimachewski blanked Eranielle Soriano, 6-0, 6-0, in the girls' 16-under class in the Adidas Tennis Challenge 2004 yesterday at the Ynares Sports Complex claycourts in Pasig City. Flores and Klimachewski towed Jessica Agra, who routed Tiara Guadayo, 6-0, 6-0, in the Adidas netfest organized by CTW and supported by Milo and Globe with Philta sanction. In the boys' 12-under bracket, Marco Suntay tripped Bryan Sabado, 6-2, 6-4; Alberto Villamayor ousted Kevin Mamawal, 6-0, 6-0, and Jose Lorenzo Ferrer downed Majed Yousif, 6-0, 6-0.

Dionisio new SMC endorser

DIONISIO

THE POOL of sports talents of San Miguel Corp. has grown richer with the addition of multititled shooter Jethro Dionisio to the elite group. The 32-year-old Dionisio, who was the Philippines' lone entry in trap shooting in the Athens Olympics, is now an endorser for San Miguel Super Dry Beer. He gained six world championships in practical shooting during the 1990s. "I am very grateful for the support of SMC, which greatly helped fulfill my dream of being an Olympian," Dionisio said. Since he shifted to trap shooting in 2000, Dionisio had already made big strides in the sport. He bagged an individual silver medal in the 2001 Southeast Asian Games in Kuala Lumpur, an individual silver in the 2002 Asian clay shooting championships in Bangkok, and individual and team bronze in the 2002 Busan Asian Games. He took a team gold medal in the Hanoi SEAG last December. Dionisio copped three Steel Challenge (World Speed Shooting Championship) crowns (1990, 1992, 1993) and three World Shoot-off championships (1993, 1994, 1995).

Gopez heads World Senior team

SIX players led by NGAP president Benny Gopez will leave for the United States tomorrow to represent the Philippines in the annual World Senior Amateur golf team championship. The 60-year-old Gopez is part of a four-man team that will play in the team side of the event that tees off at the Pala Mesa Resort course in Fallbrook, California on Aug. 21. Gopez will team up with Commodore Danny Pizarro (65), Col. Leonardo Calderon (73) and Gen. Roberto Sabularse (61). The Filipinos won in New Mexico in 2002 with a team that also had Pizarro and Calderon. Gopez and Sabularse are first-timers in the event. Jun Escano and Clyde Fernandez will join the trip to play in the individual tournament, where all the players are classified according to handicap. Meanwhile, the NGAP board meets at the Club Malarayat in Lipa City today to discuss next year's calendar of events and the country's participation in the coming Putra Cup in Indonesia.

Musong Castillo

Grand eyeball badminton gets support

PRINCE Rackets, together with Toby's Sports, reiterates its commitment to support badminton in the country by sponsoring the First Grand Eyeball of Online Badminton Groups. The Grand EB with the theme "Sa Larong Badminton, Hindi Ka Nag-iisa" will be held on Saturday at the Powersmash Badminton Center, 2227 Pasong Tamo St., Makati City. This play-all-you-can event will start at 7 a.m. and will end at 7 p.m. Supported by Smash Philippines Inc. and Baddicts, it promises to be the biggest get-together of badminton enthusiasts.

ASEAN Veteran Basketball lures 16 teams

THE ASEAN Veteran Basketball, which is held every year in different countries, is going on in Manila for the first time at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Hosted by the AK7 group of companies, the 13th edition of the event have drawn Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Indonesia, and host country Philippines. Sixteen teams, divided into two categories (40 years and 50 years) are competing in the event, which will end on Thursday. Nine teams are entered in the 50 and above and seven in the 40 and above. The AK7 companies are Alpha Seven Trades Inc., Kamel 7 Systems, Mirage 7, Xeven 7 Manufacturing, AK7 Ent. Corp. and CnK7.

Sodusta cops Torre golf overall title

GEN. JEFF Sodusta, toting an 18 handicap, scored a 10-under par 86 points to cop the net overall championship in the 36-hole Dr. Pablo O. Torre Foundation Open Golf Tournament at the Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club, Brgy. Bata, Bacolod City, over the weekend. Scratch player Francis Gaston, the reigning National Seniors champion, carded 74 points to rule the overall gross category. Gaby Monfort kept the ladies division crown with an 8-under par 84 points. Justine Braga and Angele Algara were the 1st and 2nd runner-up, respectively. Korean Jae Woo Yang topped Class A (0-9 handicap) while Class C Champion was Seve Oliva of Orchard Golf and Country Club. Iloilo's Jay Javelosa topped Class D, besting seven others who matched his 10-under-par 86 points, via the countback.

MCC 2050 below active chess Saturday

REGISTRATION is now accepted for the MCC 2050 below and Unrated Active Chess tournaments at the J&F Divino Bldg. at 967 Aurora Blvd. near LRT 2 Anonas Station, Quirino District in Quezon City. The 2050 below event is set to kick off at 10 a.m. on Saturday. The Unrated event is open to players with National Chess Federation of the Philippines ratings of not over 1800 and will be held at 10 a.m. on Sunday. The tournament offers P3,000 for the champion. For details, call 826-8560 or 0916-8521069.

A lesson in history

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

OK, class, our lesson for today is history. The Olympic Games are on. For a change, we need to be current. So put away your Geometry books and let's go Olympic.

First off, where did it all begin? I mean, where was the Olympics born?

Do I see Kolantro raising his hand?

"Yes, Sir, it's me, Kolantro."

Your answer?

"Greece, Sir."

You are quite right, Kolantro. But where in Greece?

I see Kolantro raising his hand again but is that Ligayo back there near the wall, also raising his hand? Yes, I can see Ligayo raising his hand. OK, Ligayo let's hear it?

"Athens, Sir."

Nice try. But sorry, Ligayo, not Athens.

Why, I see Kolantro standing up. Yes, Kolantro?

"But, Sir, it's really Athens!"

Not really.

Any more answers?

I see no one raising his hand. It seems nobody knows it. *Sirit*?

"*Sirit*, Sir."

OK, it's Olympia.

Do you know that the Olympiad is much older than Jesus Christ?

It is said that Jesus Christ was born 2,000 years or so ago. The Olympiad was believed to have been born around 776 B.C.-B.C. here meaning Before Christ, in case you have forgotten.

The first Olympics were held in Olympia and athletes were believed to have competed in only one event called the stadium race covering 170 meters.

Now why would Athens soon become the birth of the Olympics?

Well, much earlier than the Olympiad in 776 B.C., a historic event happened in Athens in 499 B.C.

It was in Athens where Phidippides, a messenger, ran from Marathon to Athens in 499 B.C. to deliver to the Athenians the news of the victory of Athens over the invading Persians in the Battle of Marathon.

But Phidippides' feat ended in tragedy. Right after delivering the news, Phidippides died, an apparent victim of what modern medicine now calls a heat stroke. His death triggered a national sorrow and soon, the Romans, who conquered Greece, would ban the Games through the Byzantine emperor, Theodorius I, who considered the event pagan.

It would take almost 2,000 years later before the Olympiad would be revived.

Near the turn of the 19th century, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, an idealist French aristocrat, succeeded in exerting his influence on several world leaders to revive the Olympics.

In 1896, Coubertin unveiled the modern Olympiad in Athens.

That was an Olympiad bereft of the keen competition we've seen in recent memory—and what we will see in Athens up to Aug. 29.

Consumed by the romantic notion of British amateur sport and governed mainly by the spirit of friendship and fair play, Coubertin hatched an Olympics that were, in the words of Associated Press columnist Jim Litke, "as much about cooperation as competition, played by heirs and other members of the moneyed class with plenty of time on their hands."

Coubertin completely overhauled the original Olympics, which were almost deadly in spirit, as if in keeping tradition with Phidippides' instant death.

While Coubertin's motto of "how you play the game should be the ultimate goal in every Olympiad, rather than treat victory as the main reason for competition" still sounds noble to many, to others, though—especially those from First World countries—that has become empty rhetoric. In fact, Coubertin's slogan seems contrary to the original credo of the Olympiad.

Said Litke: "The original Olympians did everything and anything to win. They competed as though their lives depended on it, which—considering how violent some of the contests were—often was literally true."

He could be right.

In the ancient Olympiad, athletes had been already looking for performance-enhancers and history tells us sheep testicles were their No. 1 vitamins then for power and stamina. Aren't bull testicles also touted as power-meals by bullfight aficionados in Spain?

But some 2,800 years later after the first Olympiad, those traditional power-enhancers have become obsolete. Again, as Litke said: "Athletes in just about every sport today make enough money to afford the best science available." Include power-making drugs.

Thus, the doping threat keeps hounding every Olympiad, starting in the Sixties. Remember Ben Johnson in Seoul '88? After failing his dope test, that athletic black eye became so high-profile it almost overshadowed the entire magnitude of the Seoul Olympics.

In Athens, officials have started drug-testing two weeks before the start of competition—a break from tradition. Let's hope the dope threat gets licked—even as a Kenyan boxer had been caught and sent home days before he could don his gloves.

Hey, Ligayo, what was Ben Johnson's sport in Seoul?

"The century dash, Sir."

Very good!

Now Kolantro, tell me, is sheep testicle banned for athletes competing in Athens?

"No, Sir."

Why?

"Because it was never banned in ancient Athens."

Class dismissed.

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Vijay grabs PGA crown via playoff

KOHLER, Wisconsin—Fiji's Vijay Singh held his composure to win the 86th US PGA Championship in a three-way playoff on Sunday, clinching the third major title of his career.

The world No. 3, US PGA champion at Sahalee in 1998, holed a 10-foot birdie putt at the par-four 10th, the first of three extra holes, to edge out Americans Justin Leonard and Chris DiMarco for the prized Wannamaker Trophy.

Singh parred Nos. 17 and 18, to secure his fifth PGA Tour victory of the year.

The trio had completed a tough final round at Whistling Straits level on eight-under-par 280, Singh carding a 76, Leonard 75 and DiMarco 71.

"I'm a bit surprised that I won the way I scored today," said the 41-year-old Singh, whose closing four-over 76 was the highest final round by a winner in the tournament's history.

'Justin let me off there on the last hole (of regulation), and a few other holes before that."

The Fijian, winner of the 2000 US Masters, led by a shot going into the final day but appeared to throw away his victory hopes when he double-bogeyed the fourth and dropped more strokes on seven and 15.

However Leonard, who was one clear with three to play in regulation, bogeyed three of the last five holes to force the playoff.

Three-time major winner Ernie Els returned a 73 to tie for fourth at seven-under 281 with American Chris Riley, also after a 73.

Masters champion Phil Mickelson closed with a 74 to share sixth place with Ireland's Paul McGinley (69) and South Korea's K.J. Choi (70).

World No. 1 Tiger Woods was one of several players to struggle, mixing five bogeys with four birdies on his way to a one-over 73.

Woods, who has not won a major since the 2002 US Open, finished at two-under 286. *Reuters*

Northwoods rips Cangolf in Fed finals

ROYAL Northwoods of Bulacan got the crucial breaks when matches went tight to overpower Canlubang in their home-and-away showdown and capture the Johnnie Walker-Federation Golf League crown over the weekend.

The Bulakeños snatched a 3-1 decision at Canlubang by winning the bestball and scramble matches that went all the way to the 18th and pulled off a 2.5-1.5 decision at home for a 5.5-2.5 victory.

The rock-solid tandem of Danny Dalija and Boy Unson sparked the final-day rampage when they rallied from four down with five holes to go to salvage a draw against Bing Bunyi and Japanese expatriate Yoshihiko Akasaka in the alternate-shot format.

Needing just another full point to bag the title, the tried and tested pair of Rodel Mangulabnan and a fever-stricken Richard Joson took over, scoring a 1-up win over the Canlubang tandem of Jimmy Feliciano-Charlie Carmona in their high-low duel, rendering the other two matches no-bearing.

Ending in agreed draws were the bestball battle pitting Northwoods' Omar Dungca-Lito Cruz against Mari Hechanova-Marco Olives and Korean teener Kim Chang Hoi-Sonny Donato versus Canlubang's Abe Rosal and JR Banzon.

Fed League chief backer Johnnie Walker Scotch Whisky will throw a party on Sept. 15 at the Casino Filipino-Parañaque for the 16 teams that saw action in the three-month tournament organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines Inc. and co-sponsored by Pagcor and Smart Communications.

Expected to grace the occasion are top officials of the Federation led by president Ogie Manalo and chair Richie Garcia and Diageo Phils./Johnnie Walker headed by managing director Charles Ireland.

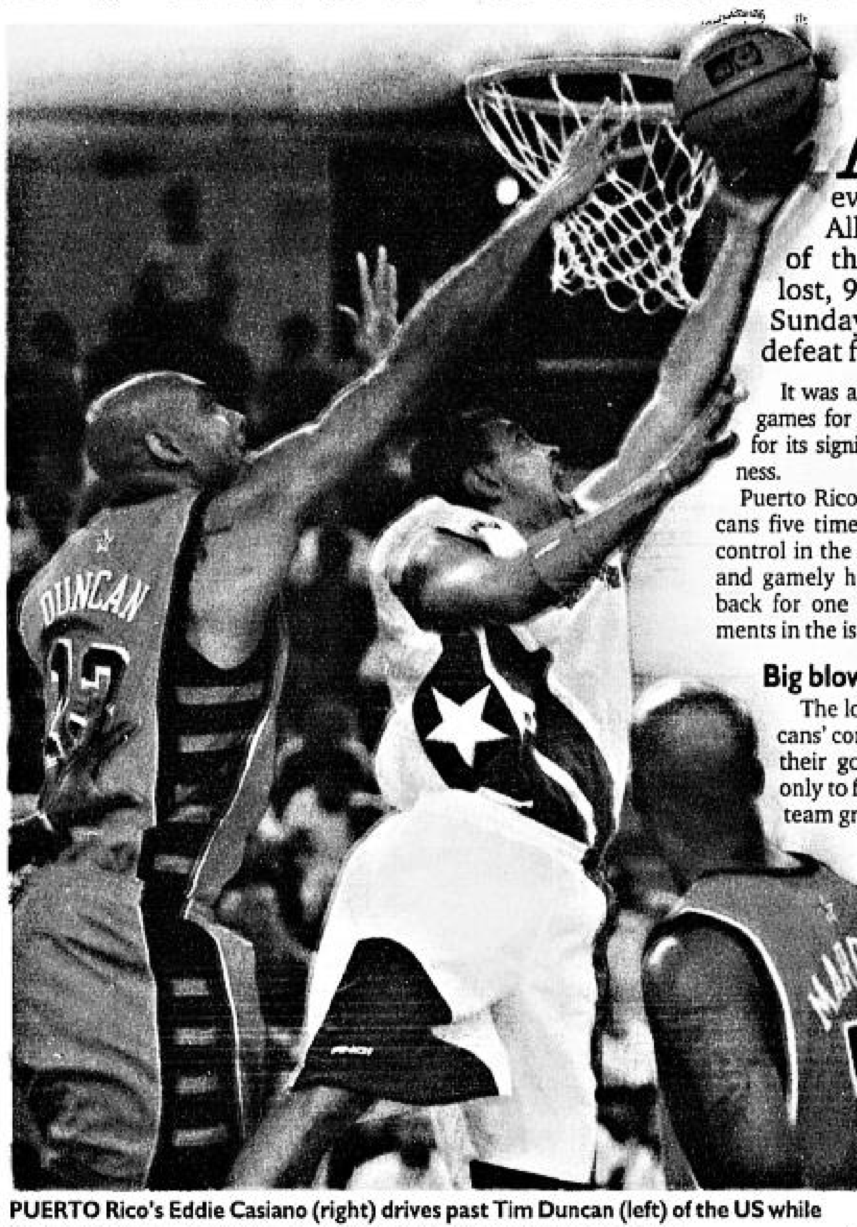
Northwoods captain Tony Pancho had to field August Cruz to partner Dungca in bestball play at Canlubang after Lito Cruz fell ill. They did a good job just the same against Hechanova and Olives as Northwoods became the sixth team to win the Fed League in seven years.

REUTERS

FRANCE'S Laura Flessel-Colovic (left) and Hungary's Ildiko Mincza-Nebald strike in unison in the women's individual epee in the Athens Olympics. Flessel-Colovic won.

OLYMPIC BASKETBALL

P. Rico shames US cagers



PUERTO Rico's Eddie Casiano (right) drives past Tim Duncan (left) of the US while Stephon Marbury looks on. The highly touted Americans lost, 92-73. AFP

ATHENS, Greece—In an upset as historic as it was inevitable, Tim Duncan, Allen Iverson and the rest of the US basketball team lost, 92-73, to Puerto Rico on Sunday, only the third Olympic defeat for the Americans.

It was also the most lopsided loss in the games for the US team, alarming not only for its significance but also for its decisiveness.

Puerto Rico, which had lost to the Americans five times in the past 13 months, took control in the first half, led by 22 at halftime and gamely held off a fourth-quarter comeback for one of the biggest sports achievements in the island territory's history.

Big blow

The loss was a big blow to the Americans' confidence, but it did little to hurt their gold medal chances. They need only to finish in the top four of their six-team group to reach the quarterfinals.

As Carlos Arroyo left the court with just over a minute left, he defiantly pulled at the words "Puerto Rico" on his jersey. He led his team with 24 points.

The US nearly lost in the semifinals at Sydney on a last-second miss by Lithuania, then dropped three games on its home turf at the 2002 World Championships in Indianapolis—the first losses ever by a US team of NBA professionals.

This year's team, weakened by the defections and rejections of 12 top players, opened its pre-Olympic tour of Europe with a 17-point loss to Italy and a last-second victory over Germany—a pair of games in which their vulnerability to a tight zone defense was clearly exposed.

Puerto Rico used that defensive strategy, too, and the Americans could do next to nothing against it.

16 straight

After Lamar Odom made their first 3-pointer, the Americans missed 16 straight. They tried to get the ball inside, but Puerto Rico collapsed several defenders into the paint and took the US team's best player, Duncan, out of the offensive equation.

American teams had been 24-0 since the professional Olympic era began with the 1992 Dream Team, but now there is a blemish on their record to go with their two losses to the Soviet Union in the 1972 gold medal game and the 1988 semifinals.

They handled the loss to Puerto Rico with grace, congratulating their opponents and joining them in a huddle at center court before both teams exited to a standing ovation.

The US Olympic team's record now stands at 109-3.

In other matches Sunday, Manu Ginobili's off-balance shot just a split-second before the final buzzer gave Argentina an emotional 83-82 victory over Serbia-Montenegro.

Ginobili scored 27 points in the match, which gave Argentina revenge for a defeat at the 2002 Worlds in which a non-call by a referee at the end of regulation sent the game into overtime to help Serbia-Montenegro—then known as Yugoslavia—win.

Serbia-Montenegro's coach protested that Ginobili's shot came late, but television replays clearly showed him releasing the shot in time. Host Greece defeated Australia, 76-54. *AP*

Mutlu cops 3rd gold; Polsak first Thai female champion

ATHENS, Greece—Halil Mutlu of Turkey won his third consecutive Olympic weightlifting gold medal in the 56-kilogram category Sunday, ignoring his biggest rival's prediction that the Little Dynamo was ready to lose with yet another overpowering performance on the sport's biggest stage.

Mutlu, his career in doubt two years ago following two serious injuries, joined Turkish predecessor Naim Suleymanoglu and Greece's Pyrros Dimas and Khaki Kakiasvilis as three-time weightlifting gold medalists. Both Greek lifters go for their fourth consecutive golds later in the Athens Olympics.

Mutlu so idolized the now-retired Suleymanoglu, the Pocket Hercules, that he patterned his walk after him. When it comes to mimicking Mutlu at 56 kg, no one can compare.

Mutlu, only 1.50 meters tall yet one of just four men to lift three times his body weight, remained unbeaten against all active weightlifters. He hasn't lost since finishing second at the 1995 worlds, and has won 16 of his last 17 world-level competitions.

Earlier on a day of weightlifting firsts, world champion Udomporn Polsak got the one that counted most by becoming the first Thailand female athlete to win an Olympic gold medal.

Polsak, missing only once during six powerfully executed lifts that gradually pulled her away from a small eight-lifter field, held off Indonesia's Lisa Raema Rumbewas in the 53-kg class Sunday for only the third Olympics gold medal by any Thai athlete. *AP*

Nestle MILO
The Official Energy Drink of the Philippine Team to the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics

ATHENS SUMMER OLYMPICS MEDAL TALLY

Country	G	S	B	Total
China	5	2	1	8
Australia	4	1	3	8
Japan	4	1	0	5
Italy	2	1	0	3
Turkey	2	0	1	3
Ukraine	2	0	1	3
United States	1	4	3	8
Russia	1	3	2	6
France	1	2	2	5
Hungary	1	1	1	3
Thailand	1	0	1	2
South Africa	1	0	0	1
Poland	0	2	0	2
Netherlands	0	1	2	3
Germany	0	1	1	2
Britain	0	1	0	1
Georgia	0	1	0	1
Indonesia	0	1	0	1
Portugal	0	1	0	1
Serbia & Montenegro	0	1	0	1
Slovakia	0	1	0	1
Belgium	0	0	2	2

Ozamiz freezes Spring winning streak

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—The Ozamiz Cotta stopped the streaking Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna Spring, 81-74, Sunday in the crossover stage of the National Basketball Conference (NBC) finals at the RECS Complex.

Down, 57-59, at the end of the third period, the Cotta of Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog Sr. broke away in the final quarter with a 13-2 run on the way to their fifth win in nine games while snapping the three-game roll of Spring of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro.

Laguna (4-3) slid to second in the North Division while the Cotta improved to 5-4 behind pacesetting Cebu's Tribu Sugbu (6-1) in the event backed by Panasonic, Spring Cooking Oil, PCSO, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Cebu Ferries, Air Philippines, Supercat, Skygo Motorcycles, Accel and Molten.

JESS YUSON

PCU'S Robert Sanz (9) hauls the board over Benilde's Jay Sagad (8) and Carlo Manding.

Bombers keep Final Four hopes alive

By Jasmine W. Payo

JOSE Rizal University kept its Final Four hopes alive yesterday as the Bombers outclassed the San Beda Lions, 74-71, in the 80th NCAA senior basketball tournament at the Makati Coliseum

Senior swingman Marco Fajardo drilled 17 points, including a three-pointer that lifted JRU, 73-69, in the final 16 seconds.

In the other senior game, rookie standout Gabby Espinas delivered a monster performance with 20 points and 22 rebounds to lead the Philippine Christian U Dolphins past the St. Benilde Blazers, 72-68.

PCU climbed to second with Perpetual at 6-4, while San Beda joined Mapua at third with 5-5 cards. JRU improved to 4-6, while St. Benilde stayed winless in 10 outings.

JRU squandered its 14-point lead in the third quarter as San Beda closed in, 63-61, midway in the fourth period. It was then that Fajardo took over, unleashing eight of JRU's final 11 points.

"If we lost this game, we're out of the Final Four contention. The boys knew the situation," said JRU coach Cris Calilan, whose team finished near-bottom at the end of the first round.

In the junior games, the Red Cubs remained unbeatable as they cruised to their tenth straight victory with a 66-point rout over the Light Bombers, 122-56. The Baby Dolphins also blasted the Greenies, 92-68, to keep solo second at 8-2.

The scores:

Third game (Srs)

PCU 72—Espinas 20, Retaga 12, Sanz 11, Castro 11, Garrido 10, Belga 4, Solis 2, Acraman 2, Santos 0.

BENILDE 68—Orbeta 31, Sagad 14, Pagulo 8, Abad 6, Manding 4, Morial 3, Devaras 2.

Quarters: 15-25, 32-47, 50-57, 72-68

Fourth game (Srs)

JRU 74—Fajardo 17, Santos 16, Domangcas 11, Attunaga 8, Lindaya 7, Jorge 6, Te 6, Magtahao 3.

SAN BEDA 71—Cordero 21, Bombeo 17, Aljamal 12, Paterno 7, Angeles 5, Bughao 5, Weber 1, Arbole 1.

Quarters: 11-19, 37-33, 59-52, 74-71.

NCR booters blast Iligan

POWERHOUSE National Capital Region trounced Iligan City, 17-0, yesterday to lead Group B of the inaugural PFF Super Ferry National Under-19 Women's Football Championship at the Marikina City Sports Center. The NCR girls followed up their 5-0 blasting of Cagayan de Oro-Misamis Oriental late Sunday.

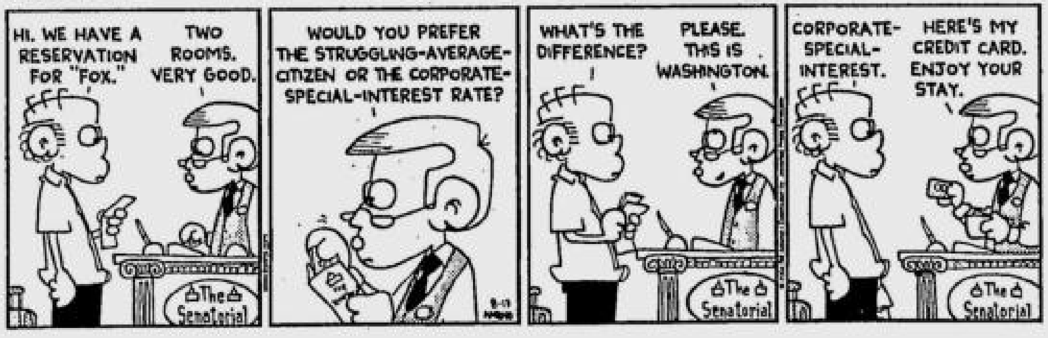
The 12 teams in the weeklong tournament, co-organized by the Philippine Football Federation and the Marikina City Football Association and backed by Marikina Mayor Marides C. Fernando and the city government, are bracketed in three groups. The top-ranked teams of each group plus the best second-place team will earn semifinal berths.

Negros Occidental held Davao to a scoreless draw in Group A, while Laguna blasted Legaspi-Albay, 9-0, in Group C.

Masbate drubbed Rizal-Montalban, 5-0, and Cebu defeated Baguio, 2-0, to stay in contention for semifinal slots.

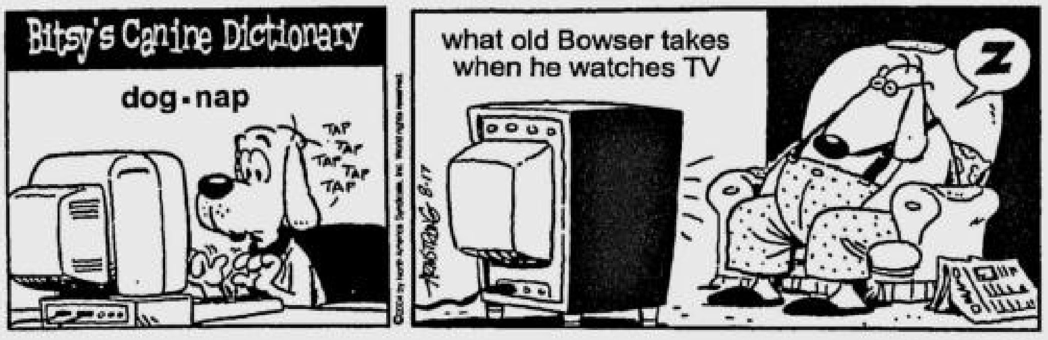
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


HI. WE HAVE A RESERVATION FOR "FOX."
TWO ROOMS. VERY GOOD.
The Senatorial
WOULD YOU PREFER THE STRUGGLING-AVERAGE-CITIZEN OR THE CORPORATE-SPECIAL-INTEREST RATE?
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?
PLEASE. THIS IS WASHINGTON.
CORPORATE-SPECIAL-INTEREST.
HERE'S MY CREDIT CARD. ENJOY YOUR STAY.

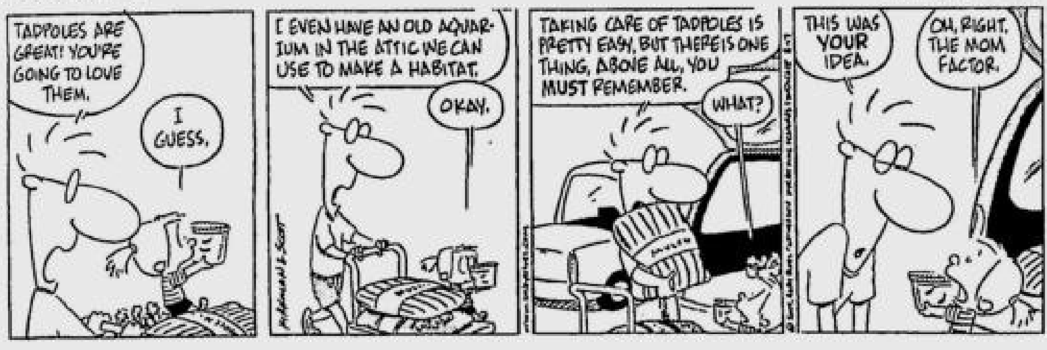
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


Bitsy's Canine Dictionary
dog-nap
TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP
what old Bowser takes when he watches TV
Z

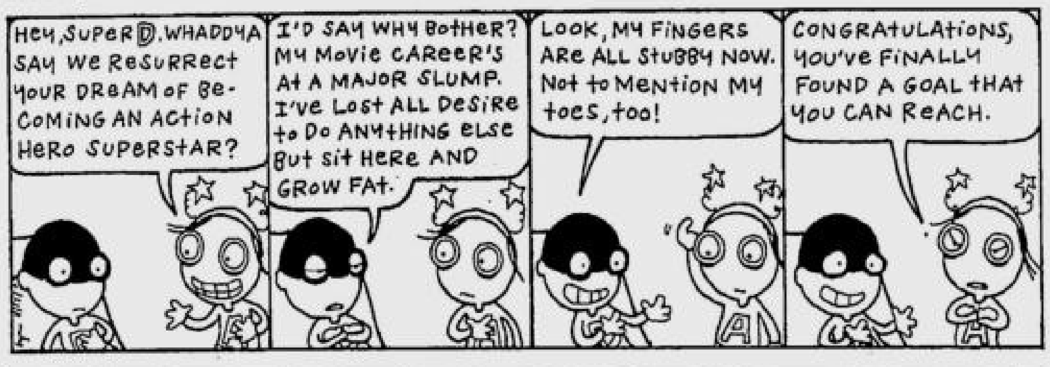
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


TADPOLES ARE GREAT! YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE THEM.
I GUESS.
I EVEN HAVE AN OLD AQUARIUM IN THE ATTIC WE CAN USE TO MAKE A HABITAT.
OKAY.
TAKING CARE OF TADPOLES IS PRETTY EASY, BUT THERE IS ONE THING, ABOVE ALL, YOU MUST REMEMBER.
WHAT?
THIS WAS YOUR IDEA.
OH, RIGHT. THE MOM FACTOR.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Super D. WHADDYA SAY WE RESURRECT YOUR DREAM OF BECOMING AN ACTION HERO SUPERSTAR?
I'D SAY WHY BOTHER? MY MOVIE CAREER'S AT A MAJOR SLUMP. I'VE LOST ALL DESIRE TO DO ANYTHING ELSE BUT SIT HERE AND GROW FAT.
LOOK, MY FINGERS ARE ALL STUBBY NOW. NOT TO MENTION MY TOES, TOO!
CONGRATULATIONS, YOU'VE FINALLY FOUND A GOAL THAT YOU CAN REACH.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are powerful. You have a lot of pent-up energy and talent. You can't help running the show—it's just your style. You are your own authority figure, and you refuse to be dictated to. You protect your private life. You have a refined charm. Work hard in the year ahead for rewards in 2005-06.
Birthdate of: Mae West, actress; Robert De Niro, actor; Sean Penn, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This can be a wonderful day at work for you! You have big ideas, and you see practical ways to make them a reality. You're really in the groove!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can make great strides if you teach children or young people today. You can also make solid plans about vacations or how to expand a favorite hobby in a practical way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a marvelous day for real estate deals and family businesses. It's a good day for family members to sit down and hash out details about anything important.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel a nice balance between optimism and realism. You see what you can and cannot do. It's a particularly good day for business and signing contracts.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): If you work alone today, you can get a lot done. However, whether you work with others or in solitude, whatever you do will boost your income in a major way.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone older than you can give you excellent advice today. Be open to hot tips, wherever they come from. You can really benefit from the experience of others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a good day to discover how to turn your dreams and wishes into reality. You see which goals you have that are realistic and which are not.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is an excellent day to make travel, educational, religious or publishing plans with groups. Attend conferences and meetings. Get the input of others. You can get a lot done!

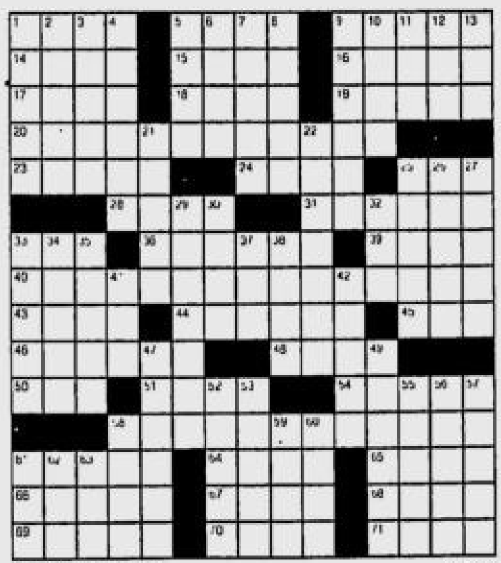
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Now is the time to move your career forward. The assistance (practical or financial) that you need from others is there for you. Count on it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today, you don't see duties or obligations as onerous. You see them as opportunities to help others and improve your own life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a good idea of how to invest your money or how best to use your resources today. You easily see what will work and what will not.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day for important discussions with partners. Your concerns are balanced and realistic. You're willing to listen, but you're not a doormat.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Nellie G. Becker
Leesburg, GA

8/17/04

ACROSS
1 SAT section
5 Recedes
9 Afterthought
14 Overhead light bulb?
15 Snare
16 Jungle vine
17 Hiking housing
18 Dorothy's dog
19 Pester
20 Style addict?
23 Skater Sonia
24 Estrada of "CHiPs"
25 Kipling book
28 "The Time Machine" people
31 Carry-on bag
33 Crowd fig.
36 Dracula portrayer
39 Pipe turns
40 Be stylish
43 Barnyard comment
44 Conductor Toscanini
45 Sloppy digs
46 Big name in planes
48 French actor Jacques
50 Winter hours in NYC
51 Morays and congers
54 Wedding worker
58 Style-setter
61 Work
64 "Paper Lion" star Alan
65 Literary collections
66 Text on a jacket
67 Spinnaker, e.g.
68 Opposite of yep
69 Pry open
70 On the ocean
71 Weight-loss plan

DOWN
1 "Sing Along With __"
2 Fred's dancing sister
3 Mortise mate
4 McDaniel of "Gone with the Wind"
5 Kitchen add-on
6 JFK and RFK
7 Use the tub
8 Tracker's trail
9 Juneau's land
10 Enjoy a repast
11 Actor Duryea
12 John's Yoko
13 Turndown vote
21 __ bells!
22 French playground
25 Potters' ovens
26 Bit of land
27 Littered
29 Power failures
30 Frankenstein's helper
32 Kauai souvenir
33 Clay brick
34 Compositions for three
35 Doctrine
37 Giant slugger
38 Closed
41 Schuss
42 Still in the sack
47 Not far away
49 Staten or Manhattan
52 Capital of Tibet
53 Eliot's Marner
55 Vietnam capital
56 Day's march
57 Turn counter back to zero
58 Shape
59 Garfield's buddy
60 "The Lion King" lion
61 JFK's successor
62 Muhammad __
63 Hobo

Monday's Puzzle Solved

G	A	G	A	■	T	O	N	E	S	■	B	O	L	T
A	L	A	N	■	E	L	O	P	E	■	O	L	E	O
B	U	Z	Z	A	L	D	R	I	N	■	O	L	G	A
E	M	A	I	L	S	■	■	C	O	M	M	I	E	S
■	■	■	O	A	T	E	S	■	R	O	B	E	R	T
S	A	P	■	S	A	L	A	■	A	T	O	■	■	■
C	L	A	P	■	R	I	N	G	■	E	X	P	E	L
A	L	L	O	W	■	A	D	O	■	L	E	A	V	E
T	A	M	P	A	■	S	A	G	S	■	S	P	I	N
■	■	■	A	I	R	■	L	O	W	S	■	A	I	T
S	T	A	R	V	E	■	S	L	I	C	E	■	■	■
M	A	L	T	E	D	S	■	■	N	A	V	A	J	O
A	N	T	I	■	S	N	A	P	D	R	A	G	O	N
R	Y	E	S	■	E	A	S	E	L	■	D	O	N	E
T	A	R	T	■	A	G	A	P	E	■	E	G	G	S

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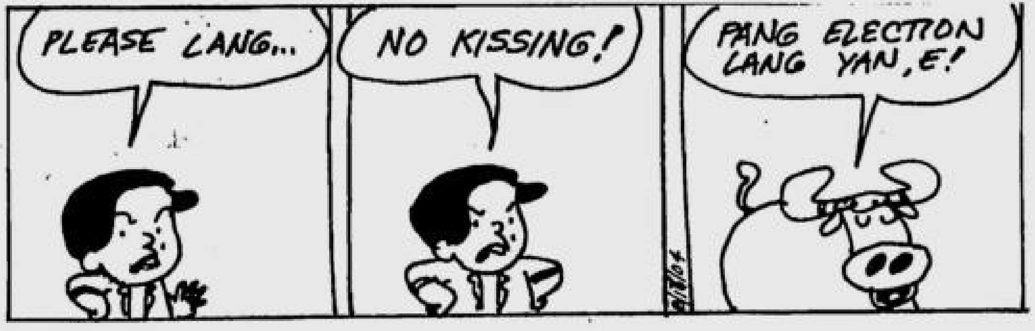
8/17/04

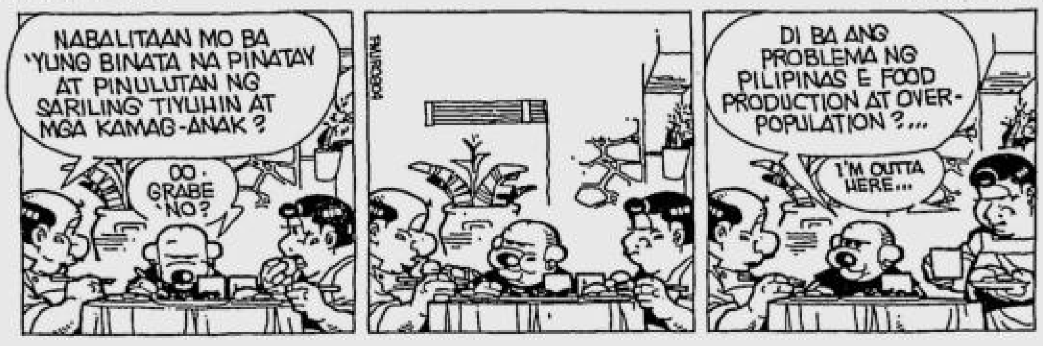
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PLEASE LANG...
NO KISSING!
PANG ELECTION LANG YAN, E!

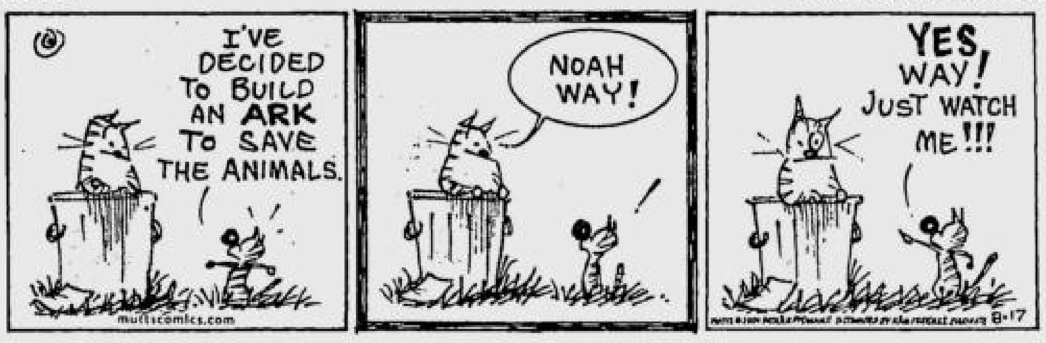
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NABALITAAN MO BA 'YUNG BINATA NA PINATAY AT PINULUTAN NG SARILING TIYUHIN AT MGA KAMAG-ANAK?
OO. GRABE 'NO?
DI BA ANG PROBLEMA NG PILIPINAS E FOOD PRODUCTION AT OVER-POPULATION?...
I'M OUTTA HERE...

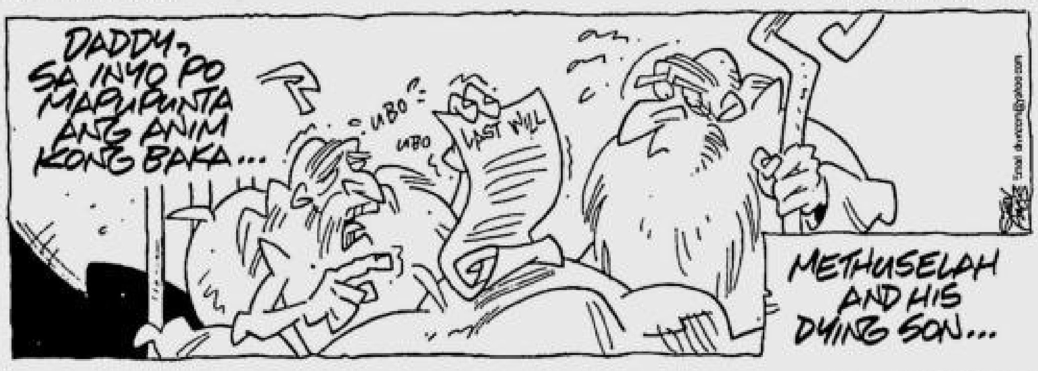
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'VE DECIDED TO BUILD AN ARK TO SAVE THE ANIMALS.
NOAH WAY!
YES, WAY! JUST WATCH ME!!!
muttscomics.com

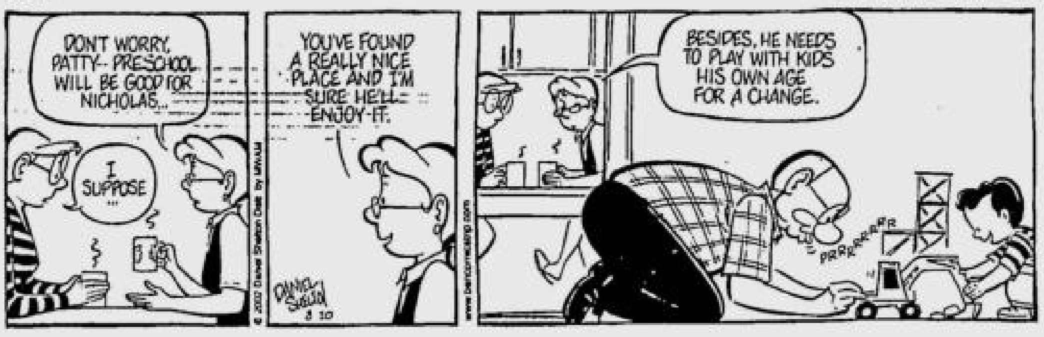
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DADDY, SA INYO PO MAPUPUNTA ANG ANIM KONG BAKA...
UBO
UBO
LAST WILL
METHUSELAH AND HIS DYING SON...

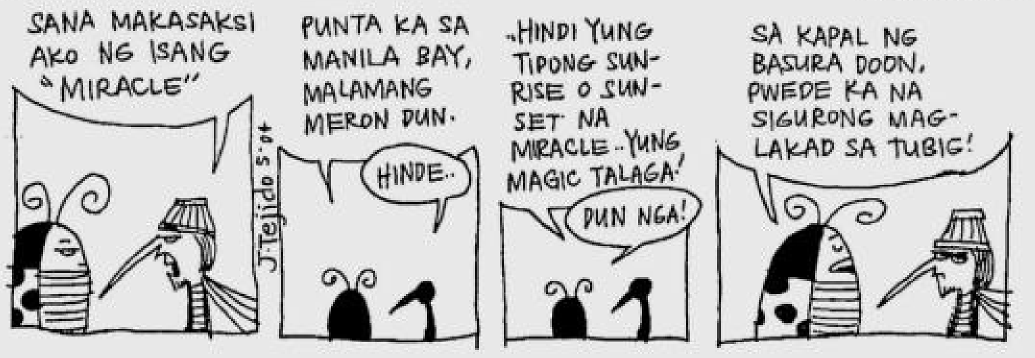
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


DON'T WORRY, PATTY-- PRESCHOOL WILL BE GOOD FOR NICHOLAS...
I SUPPOSE...
YOU'VE FOUND A REALLY NICE PLACE AND I'M SURE HE'LL ENJOY IT.
BESIDES, HE NEEDS TO PLAY WITH KIDS HIS OWN AGE FOR A CHANGE.
PRRRRRRR

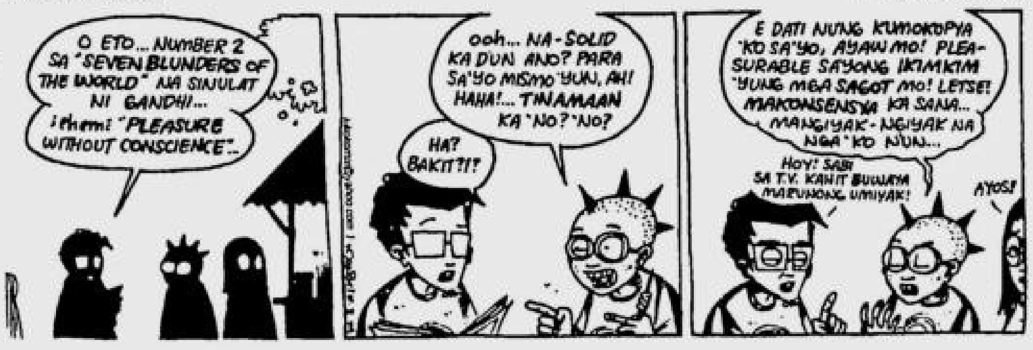
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SANA MAKASAKSI AKO NG ISANG "MIRACLE"
J.Tejido 5.04
PUNTA KA SA MANILA BAY, MALAMANG MERON DUN.
HINDE..
..HINDI YUNG TIPONG SUN-RISE O SUN-SET NA MIRACLE..YUNG MAGIC TALAGA!
DUN NGA!
SA KAPAL NG BASURA DOON, PWEDE KA NA SIGURONG MAG-LAKAD SA TUBIG!

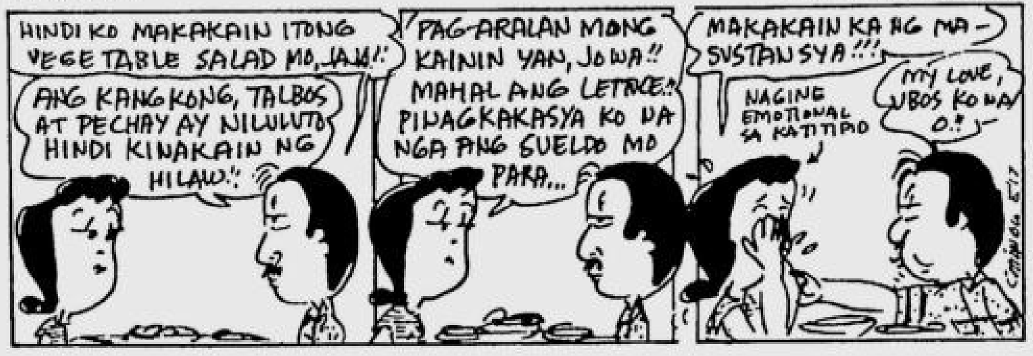
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


O ETO... NUMBER 2 SA "SEVEN BLUNDERS OF THE WORLD" NA SINULAT NI GANDHI... ehem! "PLEASURE WITHOUT CONSCIENCE"..
HA? BAKIT?!?
ooh... NA-SOLID KA DUN ANO? PARA SA'YO MISMO 'YUN, AH! HAHA!... TINAMAAN KA 'NO? 'NO?
E DATI NUNG KUMOKOPYA 'KO SA'YO, AYAW MO! PLEASURABLE SA'YONG IKIMKIM 'YUNG MGA SAGOT MO! LETSE! MAKONSENSYA KA SANA... MANGIYAK-NGIYAK NA NGA 'KO NUN...
HOY! SABI SA T.V. KAHIT BUWAYA MARUNONG UMIYAK!
AYOS!

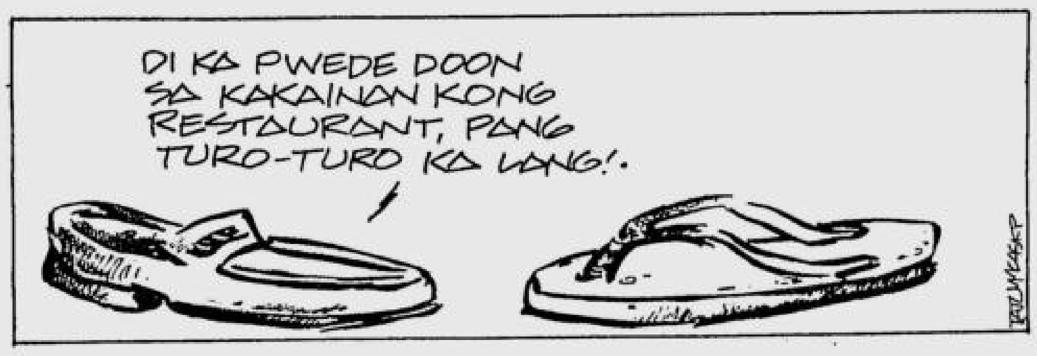
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HINDI KO MAKAKAIN ITONG VEGETABLE SALAD MO, JAM!
ANG KANGKONG, TALBOS AT PECHAY AY NILULUTO HINDI KINAKAIN NG HILAW!
PAG-ARALAN MONG KAININ YAN, JOWA!! MAHAL ANG LETTUCE!! PINAGKAKASYA KO NA NGA ANG SUELDO MO PARA...
MAKAKAIN KA NG MA-SUSTANSYA!!!
NAGING EMOTIONAL SA KATITIPID
MY LOVE, UBOS KO NA O..!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


DI KA PWEDE DOON SA KAKAINAN KONG RESTAURANT, PANG TURO-TURO KA LANG!

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Louie C. Camino

Text Feedback: inquirer ent name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Robbie Tan joins call on Mother Lily movies

By Marinel R. Cruz

"MOTHER" Lily Monteverde should "be honest enough to admit" that four of the final eight movies in this year's Metro Manila Film Festival are produced by her Regal Entertainment, according to another producer, Robbie Tan of Seiko Films.

"How can Mother Lily, in her conscience, say she only has two films in the festival?" Tan asked. "Actually, I don't know if her conscience is bothering her at all.

"She should also be reasonable enough to give up two," Tan told INQUIRER Entertainment last Saturday, echoing the sentiment of still another producer, Vic del Rosario of Viva Films.

Seiko's entry, "Bikini Open," failed to make it to the festival's "Magic 8."

Four of the movies in the final festival lineup—"Mano Po 3," "Aishite Imasu 1941," "Que Sera Sera," "Sigaw"—are said to be Monteverde's productions.

In the list of official entries, "Que Sera Sera" was identified as a production of Regal Entertainment, "Sigaw" of MegaVision and "Aishite Imasu 1941" of BasFilm Productions. MAQ Productions, known to be a sister company of Regal, is producing "Mano Po 3."

Of the eight final movies, three listed Joel Lamangan as their director: the epic drama "Mano Po 3," the drama-comedy "Que Sera Sera" and "Aishite Imasu 1941," starring Judy Ann Santos, Raymart Santiago and Dennis Trillo.

Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin, both starring in the movie "Sigaw," are exclusive talents of Regal Films, Tan pointed out.

Lamangan is now under exclusive contract to direct six movies for Regal Films, added Tan.

"Everybody in the industry knows these things," said Tan. "Now, even the members of the DGPI (Directors' Guild of the Philippines Inc.) are laughing. This is so sad."

DGPI was created to, among others, protect the rights of film directors.

Tan noted that he heard lawyer Espiridion Laxa say in an interview on a news program that Monteverde only has two entries in the December festival. Laxa is chair of the board of the MMFF executive committee.

REGAL BABIES. Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin, the stars of MegaVision's entry, "Sigaw," (and of TV's "Mulawin") are exclusive contract stars of Mother Lily's Regal Films. The movie, therefore, is also a Regal production, according to Tan.

"With all the evidence presented, how can the executive committee not do something?" Tan said. "Everyone is waiting for their move."

Tan claim he has confirmed a report that the checks issued to pay for the entry fees of the four films bore consecutive serial numbers. The notary that authenticated the sworn statements for all of the four film entries was "one and the same," he added.

Aside from submitting a copy of the screenplays of their entries, producers are required to accomplish a sworn statement stating that they will follow MMFF rules and regulations.

According to MMFF overall chair Bayani Fernando, however, the executive committee was now investigating the complaint about the four alleged Monteverde productions.

Fernando, who is also the chair of the Metro Manila Development Authority, said the investigation was initiated after MLR Films producer Jojie Alonso filed a formal complaint.

"You can rest assured that this issue will be decided judiciously and fairly by the Execom at the soonest possible time," Fernando said in a letter to Alonso. The committee has written Monteverde about the investigation.

MLR Films is the producer of Jeffrey Jeturian's "Minsan Pa," which was shut out of the festival's Magic 8.

Alonso had said the members of the MMFF executive committee "appear" to have adjusted rules and regulations "to favor certain producers over others."

"How can they still be so blind and deaf to the complaint of Attorney Alonso," Tan said of the festival's executive committee. "If they will not change the final festival lineup, their integrity will surely suffer. But there's still time for them to rectify their mistakes."

Among the members of the festival executive committee are presidential spokesperson Robert Rivera, Wilson Tieng, Dominic Du, Manuel Nuqui, Leo Martinez and Ric Camaligan.

The selection committee is headed by Cora Cruz, with members Rivera, MMDA chief of staff Rolando Josef, Manuel Nuqui, Wilson Tieng, Victor Villegas, Ric Camaligan, Marietta Tamondong, Joey Romero, Marcus Ng, Diego Cagahastian, Johnny Delgado and Digna Santiago.

Icons, newbies lead Awit 2004 nominees

MUSIC icons Gary Valenciano and Parokya ni Edgar lead the nominees for this year's Awit Awards. Gary V has seven nominations, while Parokya has eight. Not far behind are the likes of Nyoy Volante and Arnee Hidalgo, who both emerged in the music scene barely a year ago.

The novelty songs "Otso Otso" and "Mr. Suave" and Jay-R's R&B "Bakit Pa Ba" figured prominently in the song categories.

The 17th Awit Awards will be presented on Sept. 9 at The Tent at the Global City. The final judging is on Aug. 26 at Holiday Inn Galleria.

Some unreleased singles are included in the 27-category list of nominees. An example is "Mapansin," nominated for best ballad, by Paolo Santos, who is nominated for best performance by a new male recording artist. "Mapansin" is from his album, which has more high-profile tracks.

The song of the year nominees are rock ("All I Need" by Barbie Almabis and "Biglaan" by 6Cyclemind), pop ("Forever's Not Enough" by Sarah Geronimo), acoustic ("Nasaan" by Nyoy Volante and Mannos) and R&B ("Bakit Pa Ba?").

All album of the year finalists are certified gold records, at least. The three record companies with the highest number of nominations are Universal Records (29), Star Records (22) and BMG Music Pilipinas (13).

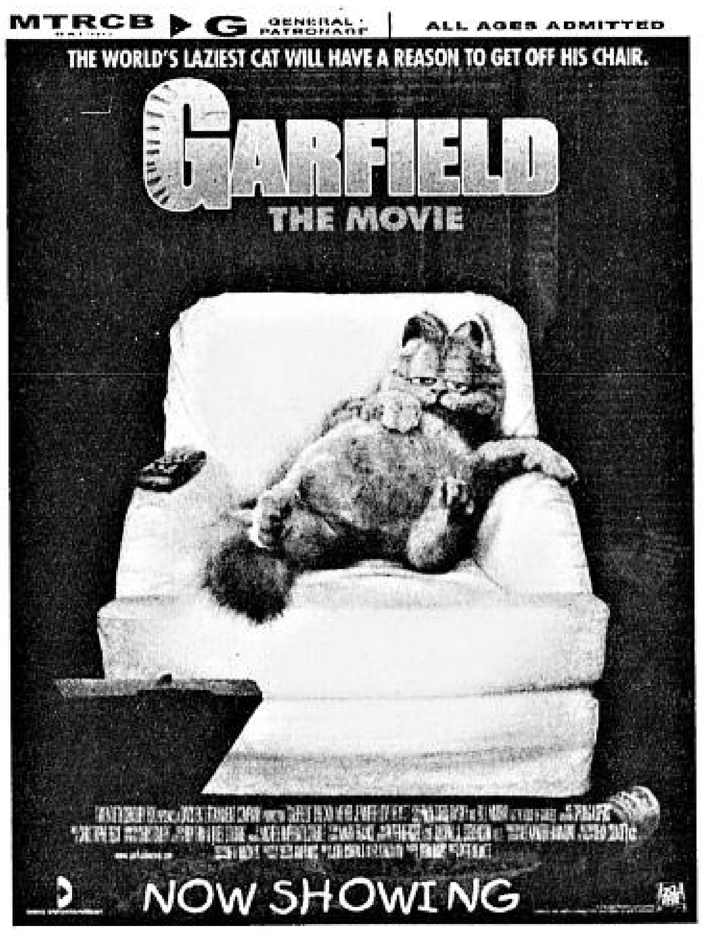
Pop stars fill the Best Inspirational/Religious category: Lea Salonga ("We are Yours"), Nyoy Volante with Mannos ("Because of Your Love"), Carol Banawa ("Awit sa Ina ng Sto. Rosario"), Jamie Rivera ("Mysteria Lucis") and Karylle ("Awit sa Ina ng Sto. Rosario").

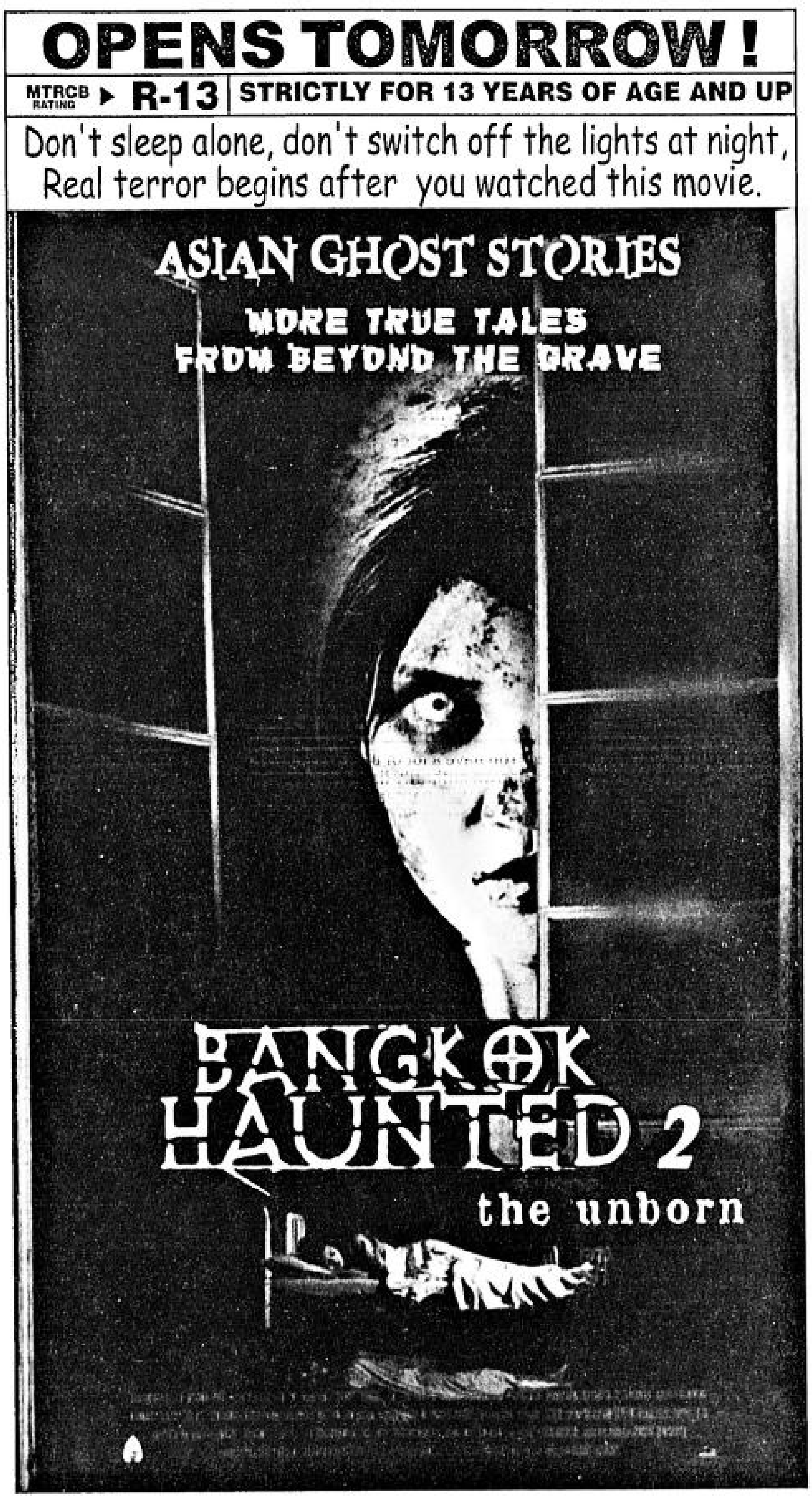
The finalists are the top five high scorers per category, based on the screening with the use of computers. Some 400 entries were considered, then narrowed down to 135.

The following is a partial list of nominees:

Best Performance by a Female Recording Artist: Lani Misalucha, "Malaya Ka Na"; Sarah Geronimo, "Forever's Not Enough"; Vina Morales, "Narito Lang Ako"; Anna Fegi, "Saan Ka Na Kaya Ngayon"; and Arnee Hidalgo, "Cold Summer Nights."

ICONS/ A23


MTRCB ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
THE WORLD'S LAZIEST CAT WILL HAVE A REASON TO GET OFF HIS CHAIR.
GARFIELD THE MOVIE
NOW SHOWING


OPENS TOMORROW!
MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP
Don't sleep alone, don't switch off the lights at night, Real terror begins after you watched this movie.
ASIAN GHOST STORIES
MORE TRUE TALES FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE
BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
the unborn

TO THE RESCUE ON AUGUST 25, 2004
UNIVERSAL PICTURES' BIGGEST SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER
STUNNING SPECIAL EFFECTS, COOL GADGETS AND NON-STOP ACTION
THUNDERBIRDS
WHEN DANGEROUS SITUATIONS EXCEED THE LIMITATIONS, THE WORLD CALLS ON CAPT. JEFF TRACY AND HIS BOYS

A few days before his 35th birthday last Aug. 12, a robust **Aga Muhlach** had an early lunch at the popular Breakfast at Antonio's, the Tagaytay City restaurant which offers breakfast all day long, together with his wife, **Charlene Gonzales**, who doesn't seem to gain a pound at all despite the rich food, and their beautiful, adorable twins, **Atasha** and **Andres**. While the twins ran all over the place, Aga greeted friends, who seemed to be about half of the restaurant's guests that morning.

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GALLERIA
632-9115 to 16

Cinema	Movie	Times
CINEMA 1 THX	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:45, 4:20, 6:55, 9:30
2	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:30, 12:25, 2:20, 4:15, 6:10, 8:05, 10:00
3	GARFIELD	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
4	.COLLATERAL	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
6	THE VILLAGE	11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00
7	SYLVIA	11:00, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
8	ETERNAL SUNSHINE	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9	CATWOMAN	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
10	I, ROBOT	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00
2	GARFIELD	11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
3	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:30, 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:00
4	ETERNAL SUNSHINE	11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:40
5	DEAD PEOPLE	11:15, 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
7	COLLATERAL	10:10, 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:00

METRO EAST
682-8193/99 / 682-8280

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	I, ROBOT	11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 9:00.
2	CATWOMAN	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
3	THE VILLAGE	12:15, 2:50, 5:25, 8:00, 10:35
4	COLLATERAL	10:45, 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 9:00
5	GARFIELD	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:10, 12:40, 3:10, 5:40, 8:10, 10:35
7	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
8	KARELASYON	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00

NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW
935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	COLLATERAL	12:10, 2:50, 5:30, 8:30
2	THE VILLAGE	10:20, 12:25, 2:30, 4:35, 6:40, 8:45
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:15, 12:45, 3:15, 5:45, 8:30
4	GARFIELD	10:30, 12:10, 1:50, 3:30, 5:10, 6:50, 8:30
5	A CINDERELLA STORY	11:00, 1:20, 3:40, 6.00, 8.30
6	CATWOMAN	11:00, 1:25, 3:50, 6:15, 8:40
7	KARELASYON	11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35
8	I, ROBOT	11:00, 1:15, 3:30

Citisquare MALABON
288-0985/2575

1 COLLATERAL
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 A CINDERELLA STORY
4 THE VILLAGE

CAINTA
240-4661

1 THE VILLAGE
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 A CINDERELLA STORY
4 COLLATERAL

STA. ROSA
(049)837-0907

1 COLLATERAL
2 GARFIELD
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 THE VILLAGE
5 MAKAMUNDO

LIPA
757-3664 / 312-5870

1 WEREWOLF
2 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
3 A CINDERELLA STORY
4 KAINAN SA HIGHWAY
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

DASMARIÑAS
852-2125 / 416-4332

1 COLLATERAL
2 THE VILLAGE
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 MAKAMUNDO
5 WEREWOLF

STARMILLS
Sn. Fernando Pampanga
875-1927 / 961-5270

1 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
2 PERLAS
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 DEAD PEOPLE
5 SPARTAN
6 THE VILLAGE

IMUS
471-8188 / 875-5858

1 COLLATERAL
2 ETERNAL SUNSHINE
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 THE VILLAGE
5 KARELASYON
6 A CINDERELLA STORY

BACOLOD
441-0458/59

1 COLLATERAL
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 ALONG CAME POLLY
4 WEREWOLF
5 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
6 PERLAS

ILOILO
336-8070/78

1 COLLATERAL
2 THE PRINCE AND ME
3 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
4 EVE
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6 PERLAS

now that I have you

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Exclusive Screening of Jandara
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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Cinema	Sound	Movie	Times
3	Dolby	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	12:30pm 2:30 pm 4:30pm 6:30 pm 8:30 pm
4	SDDS	COLLATERAL	12:00 nn 2:15 pm 4:30 pm 6:45 pm 9:00 pm
5	dts	THE VILLAGE	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6	Dolby	KA-RELASYON	12:05 pm 2:15 pm 4:25 pm 6:35 pm 8:45 pm
7	Dolby	CINDERELLA STORY	12:25 pm 2:35 pm 4:45 pm 6:55 pm 9:05 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Date	Event
Aug 18	Bench Fashion Show
Aug 21	AVON Sales Convention
Aug 22	UAAP : Ateneo vs. La Salle
Aug 27	CUSA Opening Ceremonies
Aug 31	NCA 7 STAG DERBY
Sep 2	NCA 7 STAG DERBY
Sep 7	NCA 7 STAG DERBY

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KARELASYON
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1,2,3&4	GARFIELD / COLLATERAL / THE VILLAGE/CINDERELLA
PREMIERE THEATRE	SYLVIA
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
CINEMA-2	KARELASYON
CINEMA-3	KING ARTHUR
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	I, ROBOT
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ELLA ENCHANTED
CINEMA-6	MAKAMUNDO
CINEMA-7	CATWOMAN
CINEMA-8	IMELDA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	COLLATERAL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE VILLAGE
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	CINDERELLA STORY
CINEMA-12	GARFIELD
CINEMA-14	DEAD PEOPLE
CINEMA-15	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	SPIDERMAN 2
CINEMA-1	LADY KILLERS
CINEMA-2	I ROBOT
CINEMA-4	RESERVED
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Cinema	Movie	Times	Rating
1	THE VILLAGE	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10 8:30, 10:50	GP-13
2	THE CINDERELLA STORY	11:05, 1:15, 3:25, 5:35 7:45, 10:20	GP
3	GARFIELD	10:50, 12:55, 3:10 5:15, 7:25, 10:00	GP
4	COLLATERAL	11:00, 1:40, 4:20 7:00, 10:00	R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

Movie	Rating	Times
GARFIELD	GP	12:30,2:20,4:10, 6:00,7:50,9:40
CINDERELLA STORY	GP	12:00,2:00,4:00, 6:00,8:00,10:00
THE VILLAGE	PG13	12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20
COLLATERAL	R13	11:50,2:25,5:00,7:35,10:10
NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	GP	12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00
ETERNAL SUNSHINE	R13	1:10,3:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

SHANG CINEPLEX

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	GARFIELD	FS 12:15 pm, 2:25 pm, 4:35 pm, 6:45 pm, LMF : 8:55 pm (GP)
2	COLLATERAL	FS : 11:20 am, 2:00 pm, 4:40 pm, 7:20 pm, LMF : 10:00 pm (R-13)
3	THE VILLAGE	FS : 12:45 pm, 3:20 pm, 5:55 pm, LMF 8:40 pm (PG - 13)
4	A CINDERELLA STORY	FS : 12:15 pm, 2:30 pm, 4:45 pm, 7:00 pm LMF : 9:15 pm (GP)
PREMIERE THEATRE	SYLVIA	FS : 12:15 pm, 2:25 pm, 4:35 pm, 6:45 pm, LMF ; 8:55 pm (R - 13)

For more information please call
633-7851 loc. 169 to 172

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NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Movie	Times	Rating
CINEMA 1	CINDERELLA STORY	11:05 , 1:20 , 3:35 , 5:50 , 8:05 , 10:20	GP
CINEMA 2	THEVILLAGE	11:00 , 1:15 , 3:30 , 5:45 , 8:00 , 10:15	P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
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MUSIC MUSEUM

Dates	Show	Time
AUGUST 17-18 , 24-25 & 31	NOAH SBIGBOAT	10AM & 2PM
AUG 13-14 , 20-21 & 27-28	NYOYVOLANTE & NINA	9:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

THE WIVES OF STEPFORD HAVE A SECRET

PG-13
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MATHEW BRODERICK BETTE MIDLER CHRISTOPHER WALKEN
FAITH HILL AND GLENN CLOSE

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release through Solar Entertainment Corporation

MTRCB RATING R-18 STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY

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A Nonzee Nimibutr Film

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Creditable viewing prospect

VIEWFINDER
Nestor U. Torre

WHEN we watched "Now That I Have You" recently, we were initially thrown off by female lead **Bea Alonzo**'s characterization. She was ditzy, impulsive and practically stalked a stranger (**John Lloyd Cruz**) she had a huge crush on.

Why was she so hyper and brash? No explanation was supplied for quite a long time, so we couldn't warm up to, let alone empathize with, Bea's performance.

For his part, John Lloyd was too dourly nerdy to be interesting. So, we became increasingly antsy for about two-thirds of the movie.

We understood that the film was a feel-good, *kilig* romantic-comedy-drama "for the fans," so we shouldn't expect it to be much more than that. But we did feel that we were still entitled to a logical, believable story and characters, so we weren't satisfied with what we saw.

Happily, the movie's last third made up in part for its initial weaknesses, distractions and/or excesses.

It was finally revealed that Bea's mother was an activist who had practically deserted her family. So, this could help explain her daughter's ditzy, erratic behavior, which could be a ploy to get people to pay attention to her.

As for John Lloyd, his character was such a cautious klutz because he was still reeling from a heartbreak, and was in no hurry to put himself at romantic risk again.

We liked the way that this part of the movie investigated the different aspects of love, and tried to shed light on the mysteries and vagaries of romance and compassion.

And director **Laurenti Dyogi** made good, innovative use of the movie's narrator, who would reappear at various times in different guises, to help push the complicating story to its intended denouement. Ultimately, this was: to make its two "impossibly" incompatible protagonists love each other so much that they would want to get over their inhibiting fears and doubts in a big, transformative way.

We also appreciated the initiative that the production demonstrated by opting to set quite a number of its scenes on the MRT—a difficult shooting situation that some other filmmakers would eagerly avoid.

And we liked some lines of dialogue in **Joey Reyes**' script that went beyond the usual romantic platitudes, to shed greater light on the subject of love.

Unfortunately, the cast's performances were generally unremarkable or lacking in believability. The two leads' portrayals strained for effect, thus limiting the possibilities for genuine empathy.

Still, the production has enough plus factors to make up for its perceived flaws, so it ultimately ends up as a creditable viewing prospect.

Christine Carlos at Figaro

GROOVE to the cool, soothing voice of sultry **Christine Carlos** as she sings your favorite pop, jazz and mainstream jazz tunes in a special show at Figaro this Saturday, Aug. 20, from 5 to 7 p.m. (Figaro is at the third level of the east wing of Robinson's Galleria at Ortigas.)

'The Cowardly Dog'

CARTOON Network's animated comedy, "Courage, the Cowardly Dog," airs every Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. It's about a paranoid dog whose responsibility is to protect his masters from paranormal elements that threaten the security of their home.

RX 93.1 wins Golden Dove

MONSTER Radio RX 93's "Countdown Top Seven" recently won the Golden Dove award for Outstanding Comedy Program on Radio. The program is a hilarious weekly countdown hosted by **Louie D.** It serves up the 20 biggest hits of the week, along with spicy jokes and zesty topical humor.

The Grand Awards Night is scheduled at the CCP Little Theater on Aug. 31.

Debut album

Rachelle Ann Go's self-titled debut album, fueled by the popular songs "Don't Cry Out Loud" and "Love of My Life," is fast nearing the gold record mark.

The "Search for a Star" champion's album has 13 cuts, including compositions by **Vehnee Saturno** ("From the Start" and "Stay in Love With You") and **Jimmy Antiporda** ("Here I Am Again" and "Give it All")..

Book launching

NEW Day Publishers marks its 35 years of Filipiniana publishing with an anniversary Mega Book Launching at 1 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 30 at Balay Kalinaw (Guerrero Street, Pook Dagohoy), UP Diliman. Twelve New Day titles will be launched.

Ignore Keanna and she will go away

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

SELF-CONFESSED "escort girl" **Keanna Reeves** is quite a character. After coming out with her exposé on some of the politicians and actors she claims she has escorted, now she wants to cut clean.

She insists she is not out to gain publicity and she's just telling it like it is. When I interviewed her on my show with **TJ Manotoc** ("Celebrity Dat Com"), I could tell that she's lapping up all the attention she is getting.

One moment she claimed she feared for her life because she had been getting death threats from her former *politico* clients. In the next breath she adamantly said that she would go to the extent of showing to the public some of the bouncing checks *politicos* have given her as payment for services rendered in the bedroom. Talk about aggravating the situation. Keanna really knows how to play the game!

She said she might as well join show biz because she has been thrust into the limelight after her confession. She said, "*Kung ang Kongreso nga nagkagulo dahil sa* revelations *ko eh!*"

I've seen her kind many times before, characters that flit into show biz but fizzle out as soon as a new controversy comes along. So while they are the talk of the town, they make sure to milk the issue for all it is worth.

With a screen name like Keanna Reeves, would she be taken seriously to begin with? Why the panic among some politicians? Aren't they immune by now to all the amusing characters in Congress? Ignore the likes of Keanna long enough and they will go away.

Guess list

GUESS who this sexy actress is who was the major headache of the staff and hosts of an action-packed TV show during their out-of-town taping. She refused to follow simple instructions, such as turning off her cell phone. She really gave the hosts a hard time by not cooperating with them. At one point, she deliberately threw mud on the female host's face. Insiders say the real reason the actress was acting like a prima donna is because she is still hung up on the male host. What was just a fling for the host cold have been love for the sexy star.

***

Guess who this singer is who tried to hit on a pretty young thing (the girlfriend of a TV host) while they were in the elevator. He offered her some of the cookies he was eating but the girl turned him down. He tried his luck again and invited her to a party that night. She didn't budge. To assuage his ego, the singer suddenly belted out his hit song in the hope that the girl would recognize who he was, but it was all in vain. His heart must have sunk lower than the ground floor where he and the girl parted ways as soon as the elevator opened.

Pinays in 'Rouge'

MARIEL **Rodriguez** is Backroom Inc.'s newest talent. The 19-year-old looker was cast in "Rouge," an action-packed TV series to be produced for MTV Asia. She was chosen from more than 400 hopefuls from all over Asia.

Mariel is the sister of **Kaye Garcia**, the "*pare*" girl on **Drew Arellano**'s Sunsilk commercials. Since she decided to enter show business, Mariel, like Kaye, has been getting lucky breaks.

Her first commercial was as **Lucky Manzano**'s partner in the Close-up Eucalyptus TV commercial. A few months later, she e-mailed her photos to the producers of "Rouge." She was sent to Singapore to personally audition and was cast immediately as Pam, a "walking encyclopedia."

Mariel has been in Singapore since late March, where she had martial arts training and attended acting and singing workshops. They are now starting to tape the first season of "Rouge," and there are already talks of a second season.

Joining Mariel in "Rouge" are fellow Filipina **Denise Laurel**, Singaporean **Desiree Ann Siahaan**, Vietnamese **Veronica Ngo**, and **Pamela Fields**.

Mariel is set to fly back to Manila this month to pursue a show biz career here. "I love acting, dancing and hosting and I hope I can use in the Philippines the lessons I have learned in Singapore."

"Rouge" will premiere all over Asia, including the Philippines, in October.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

Rivermaya in Hoobastank concert

SHOW TIME

RIVERMAYA, the "banda ng bayan," is all set to rock with Hoobastank in their concert tonight at the Folk Arts Theater, "Hoobastank Live in Manila—The Reason Tour.

The award-winning rock band Rivermaya is all set to warm up the stage with some of their new hits from their latest album, "Between The Stars and Waves," such as "Balisong," "241" and "A Love to Share," as well as the new single "Liwanag sa Dilim" and the classic mega-songs "Umaaraw, Umuulan," "214," "Elesi" and "Hinahanap-Hanap."

After the crowd gets all pumped up by Rivermaya, get ready for the much-awaited live performance of Hoobastank, with vocalist Doug, guitarist Dan, bassist Markku Lappalainen and drummer Chris Hesse.

Hoobastank will bring the house down with monster hit "The Reason" as well as high-energy songs "Same Direction," "Out of Control," "Remember Me," "Crawling in the Dark" and the rock ballads "Unaffected," "Running Away" and "Disappear."

"Hoobastank Live . in Manila—The Reason Tour" is presented by Smart Buddy, MTV and No Curfew Watch Stores, in cooperation with Citizen Eco-Drive Watches. It is also presented by Smart Addict Mobile, Pony Footwear, Greenwich, Petron Blaze, official residence Manila Hotel. and official TV partner ABS-CBN.

Icons, newbies lead...

From page A21

Best Performance by a Male Recording Artist: Gary Valenciano, "Ang Aking Munting Bituin" and "Kailangan Kita;" King, "Maybe;" and Erik Santos, "I Believe I Can Fly".

Best Performance by a New Female Recording Artist: Najah, "Everybody Needs to be Loved;" Arnee Hidalgo, "True;" Sarah Geronimo, "Forever's Not Enough;" Aliya Parcs, "Stop Think; and Michelle Ayalde, "The Love You Want."

Best Performance by a New Male Recording Artist: King, "Maybe;" Paolo Montalban, "She; Paolo Santos, "Mapansin;" Jed Maddela, "Let Me Love You;" and Erik Santos, "I Believe I Can Fly."

Song of the Year: "All I Need," Barbie's Cradle; "Forever's Not Enough," Sarah Geronimo; "Nasaan," Nyoy Volante with Mannos; "Mr. Suave," Parokya ni Edgar; "Biglaan," 6Cyclemind; and "Bakit Pa Ba?," Jay-R.

Album of the Year: "Playlist," Paolo Santos; "Acoustic: Nyoy Volante with Mannos;" "Bigotilyo," Parokya ni Edgar; "Gary Valenciano at the Movies;" and "Chasing Time Vol. 2," Martin Nievera.

See'eMall! AYALA CENTER ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU

AT THE CENTER

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
NOKIA EVENT August 20 to 22, 2004	HELLO KITTY 30TH BIRTHDAY PARTY August 20 to 22, 2004	IMPERIAL CIRCUS LIVE! August 20 to 22, 2004

ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GREENBELT 2	GREENBELT 3
GREENBELT 2: MUSIC STYLES from Thursday to Saturday (7-10pm) featuring Jayda & Honey (Thu), Kitchie Nadal (Fri), Acoustic Jive (Sat)	MERK'S Happy Hour: Romy Posadas Main Feature: Acousitc Jive

Rep's Globe Theater presents PINOCCHIO
August 7 to December 12

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AYALA CINEMAS

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 THE VILLAGE	1 A CINDERELLA STORY	1 A CINDERELLA STORY	1 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU 12 00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00	1 A CINDERELLA STORY 1 25, 3 20, 5:15, 7 10, 9 05, 11 00	1 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 A CINDERELLA STORY	2 COLLATERAL	2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	2 THE VILLAGE 1 20, 3 35, 5 50, 8 05	2 THE VILLAGE 12 05, 2 20, 4 35, 6 50, 9 05, 11 20	2 THE WHOLE 10 YARDS
3 COLLATERAL	3 THE VILLAGE	3 COLLATERAL 12 30, 3 00, 5 30, 8 00, 10 30		3 ETERNAL SUNSHINE 1 30, 3 45, 6 00	3 COLLATERAL
4 GARFIELD	4 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	4 I, ROBOT		4 GARFIELD 2 35, 4 20, 6 05, 7 50, 9 35, 11 20	4 PRINCE & ME
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU		5 GARFIELD		5 COLLATERAL 1 10, 3 35, 6 00, 8 25, 10 50	5 GARFIELD
		6 THE VILLAGE			
		7 CATWOMAN			

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Glorietta 1 Cinema Lobby

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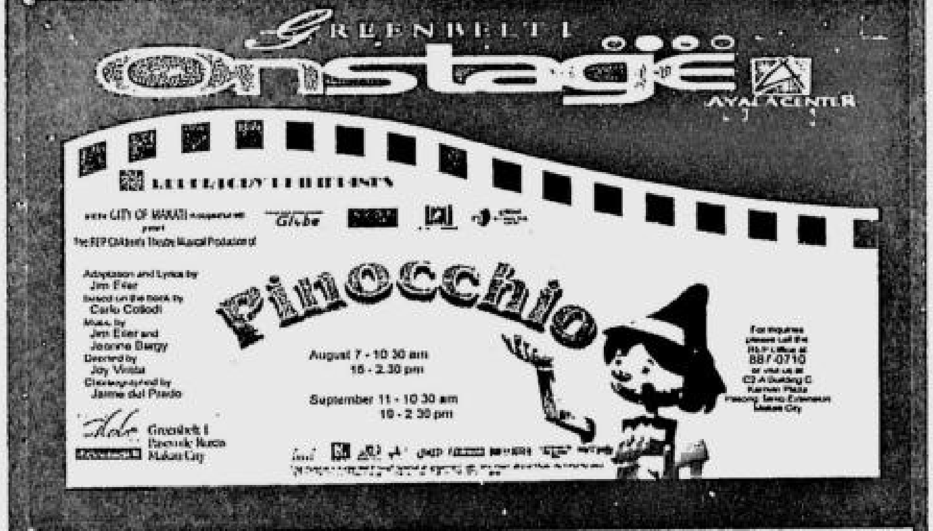
For screening schedule, pls. call 729-7777

MTRCB Rating: General Patronage

Carl's Jr. Globe Facialhaus Bioessence AYALA MALLS LoveMall!

HILARY DUFF CHAD MICHAEL MURRAY
Once upon a time... Can happen anytime.
A Cinderella Story



GREENBELT 1
Onstage
AYALA CENTER
CITY OF MAKATI
Globe
Pinocchio
Adaptation and Lyrics by Jim Eiler
Based on the book by Carlo Collodi
Music by Jim Eiler and Jeanne Bargy
Directed by Joy Virata
Choreographed by Jaime del Prado
August 7 - 10 30 am 16 - 2 30 pm
September 11 - 10 30 am 19 - 2 30 pm
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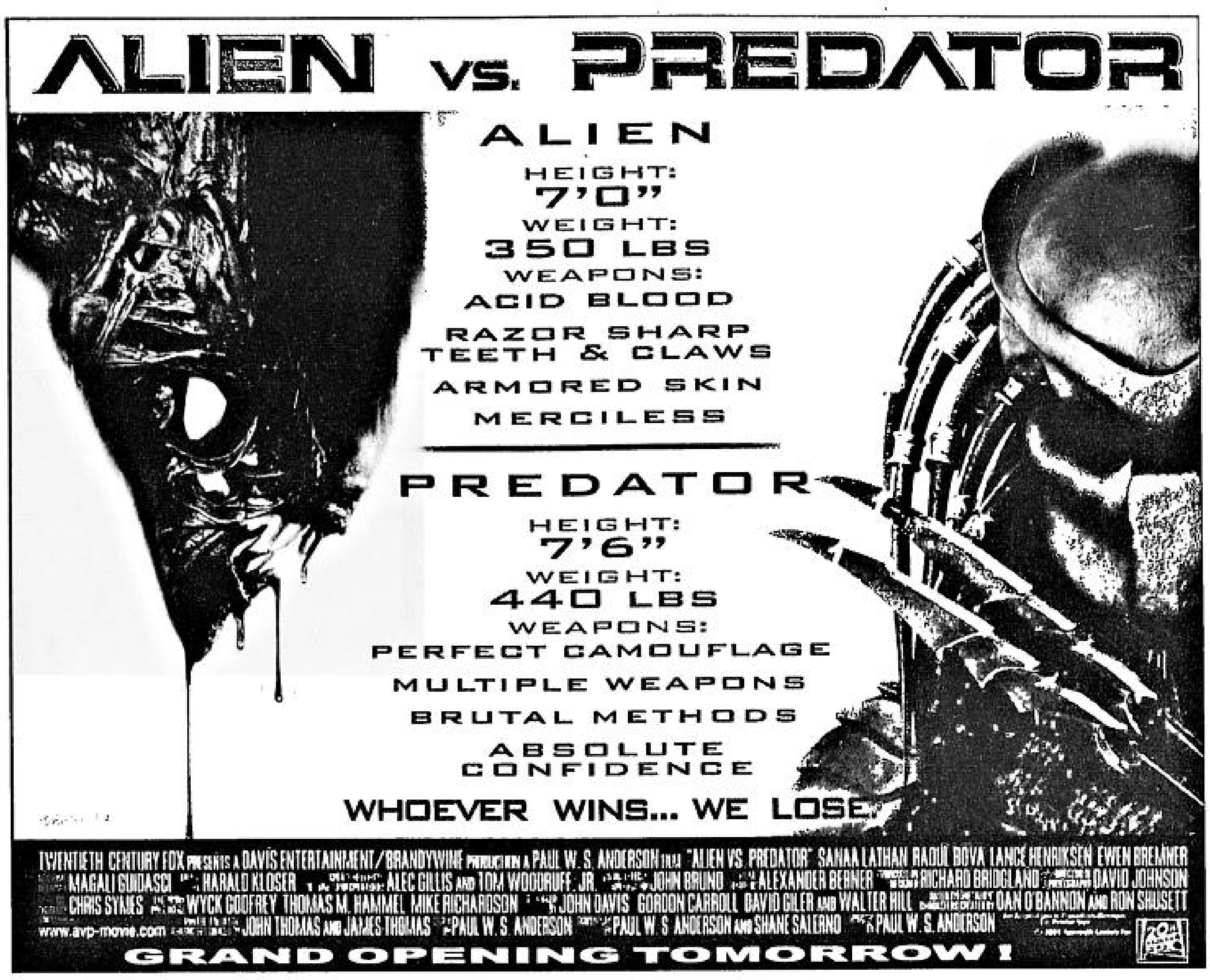
ALIEN vs. PREDATOR

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WEIGHT: 350 LBS
WEAPONS:
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RAZOR SHARP TEETH & CLAWS
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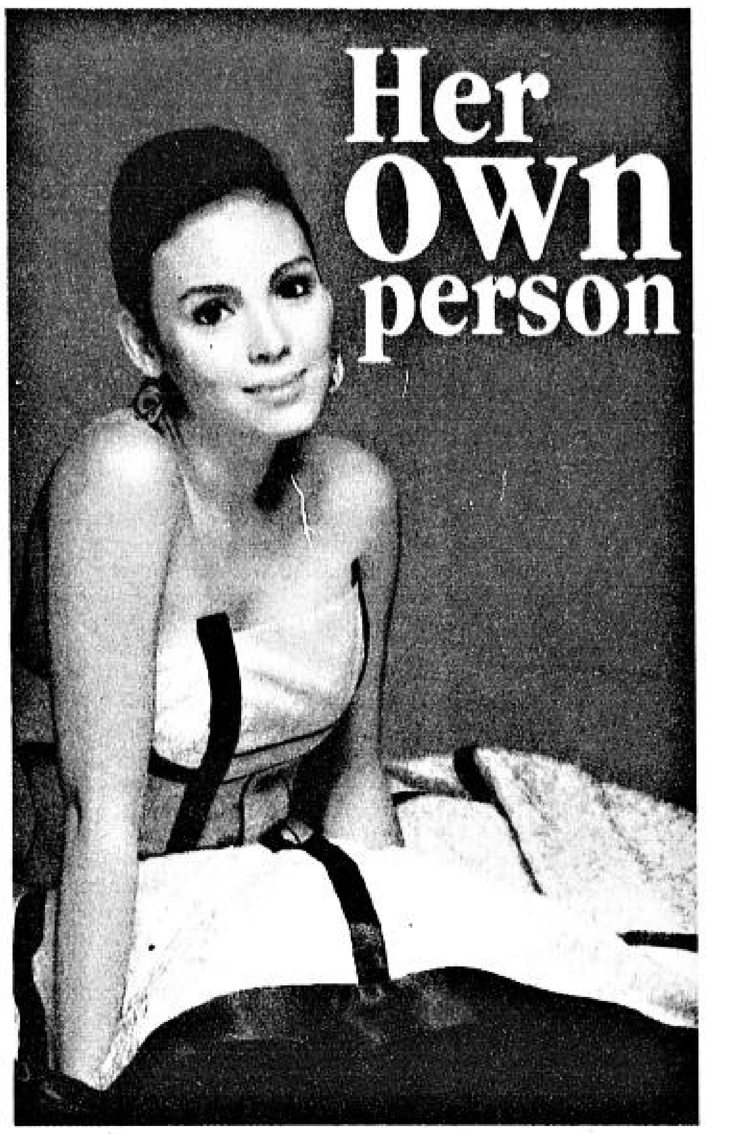

Her own person

THEY say that what can't kill you can only make you stronger.

This is true in the case of actress Claudine Barretto.

It has been about a decade since this Barretto beauty joined her elder sisters, Gretchen and Marjorie, in show business and started to have her share of controversies.

"You just learn to ignore what needs to be ignored, and be yourself," she says. "Whatever happens in my life, at least I can say I'm honest and I'm my own person."

Indeed, Claudine is known as one who will keep quiet and cry when things get out of hand. She deals with issues head-on.

Her fantaserye, "Marina," continues to be a widely watched show on ABS-CBN. She has endorsement deals left and right. And, on the personal side, she seems to be enjoying a happy romance with actor Raymart Santiago.

Read more about Claudine Barretto in the August issue of Mega magazine, now available at all leading bookstores and newsstands nationwide. For more information, call 631-2859.

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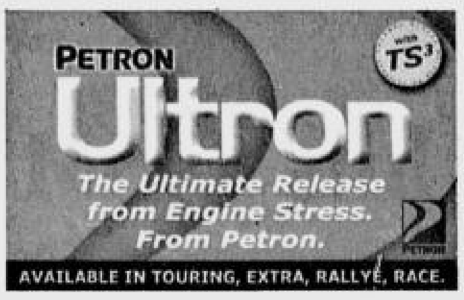
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2nd quarter growth slows to 5.2-6%

By Michelle V. Remo

RISING oil prices and a sluggish agriculture sector were expected to have slowed down economic growth during the second quarter, the National Economic and Development Authority said yesterday.

The Neda said that gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the period was estimated at between 5.2 and 6 percent, or lower than the 6.4-percent expansion recorded in the first three months of the year.

GDP is the measure of an economy's total output of goods and services for a specified period.

The agriculture sector, which accounts for a third of the economy, grew by only 4.7 percent in the second quarter compared with the 7.7 percent recorded in the previous quarter.

"While the services and industry sectors were expected to have performed better in the second quarter, the agriculture sector and oil prices (provided) all the (downside to growth)," according to Scholastica Cororaton, chief of the Neda's policy and planning division.

Crude oil prices have been on an uptrend since the US-Iraq war. International oil prices have breached record highs, topping an historical high of $45 a barrel. Domestic prices were always quick to follow movements in crude import prices.

According to the Neda's estimates, a sustained 10-percent increase in oil prices translates to a 0.2 percentage point decline in GDP growth.

Despite the expected decline in GDP growth, Cororaton said the government was not looking at changing its full-year GDP growth target because the country was still much on track to achieving it. The government has projected that the economy would grow by a range of 4.9-5.8 percent this year.

Meanwhile, Cororaton said inflation in August was still expected to stay above the 6-percent level because oil prices were not expected to normalize anytime soon. She said the increase in consumer prices was likely to average at a range of 6.1 to 6.3 percent for the month.

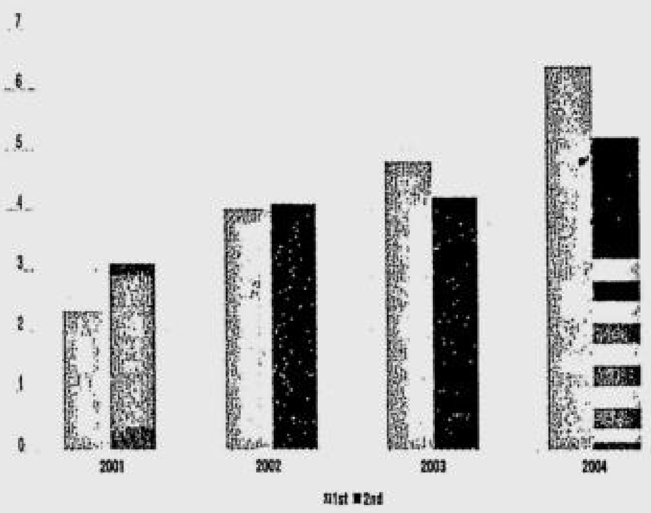
She added that the increase in oil and other commodity prices was expected to slow down only in 2006. Estimates from the Neda showed that inflation would still hover around 5 percent next year, and would only go back to the 3- to 4-percent range in 2006.

Since the price of imported crude oil was something the government could not control, the Neda said programs that would make efficient the delivery of consumer products, especially food, should be in place. Food accounts for half of the expenditures of most Filipino families, it noted.

"We should reduce traffic, improve fuel efficiency and look for ways to make farmers more productive," Neda Director General Romulo Neri said in a briefing yesterday. He said infrastructure projects that could reduce transport time were ways to reduce the cost of consumer products.

Improving the country's infrastructure through the allotment of more funds for capital outlay is part of the government's medium-term development plan. The government is aiming to increase its infrastructure spending by a P100 billion a year, and in the process improve the country's capital outlay-to-GDP ratio of only 3.3-percent, the lowest in the region.

GDP GROWTH
1st & 2nd quarters, 2001 to 2004



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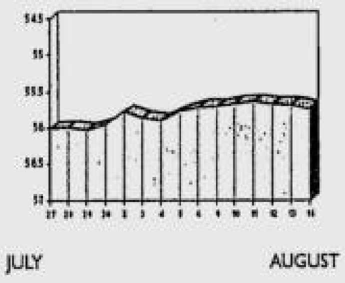

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¥ 110.92 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 16, 2004

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STOCK MARKET

Oil price worries cap market rise

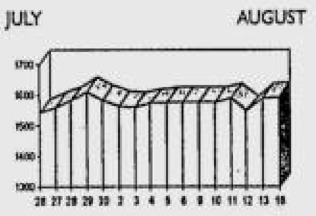
SHARE prices closed 0.26 percent higher yesterday supported by interest in selected large caps, dealers said.

They added, however, that ongoing concerns over high oil prices capped the upside.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 4.20 points to 1,594.83 after moving between 1,590.63 and 1,600.21.

Losers led gainers 46 to 29, while 40 stocks were unchanged.

Volume fell to 1.08 billion shares worth P451.8 million from 1.09 billion shares worth P502.04 million on Friday.



(See stock market report on Page B4)

OIL/ B4

Napocor: A cross RP has to bear

(Part Two)

By Abigail L. Ho

SPECIAL REPORT

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. has become a cross the government is forced to bear.

Saddled with some P1.3 trillion in debts, the state firm for years has struggled to stay afloat. The national government, for its part, has decided on drastic measures to ease Napocor's debt problems.

Before the state firm bleeds death, the national government has committed to absorb P500 billion of Napocor's debts.

But under Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), the government can absorb only up to P200 billion of Napocor's debts.

Raphael Lotilla, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) president, explained that the government could also take on the remaining P300 billion in ways other than direct absorption.

Refinancing some of the state firm's debts is one such option, he said. Borrowings for Napocor may also be done at lower costs.

"The national government is looking at it from a consolidated standpoint," Lotilla said. "That also helps to address the problem as the national government can use lower interest rates to borrow for Napocor."

Some P8 billion to P10 billion in savings can be generated if the national government directly will borrow for Napocor, he said.

In the first place, the reason Napocor is saddled with so much debt is because the state firm has an authorized capital stock of only P50 billion, with only half of that paid in, Lotilla said.

Borrowing then became the most obvious solution to financing the state firm's day-to-day operations. The advent of the Asian financial crisis in 1997 made matters even worse because most of the borrowings were dollar-denominated.

"But we have to do something about those debts," Lotilla said. "If nothing is done, that will continue to be a drag on the economy as a whole."

Strengthening Napocor as an institution is just one way to help improve the country's power industry, he said.

"No investor, after all, will be encouraged to come into a sector that has nothing to offer but headaches."

It is all a matter of management, he said. A balancing act of sorts.

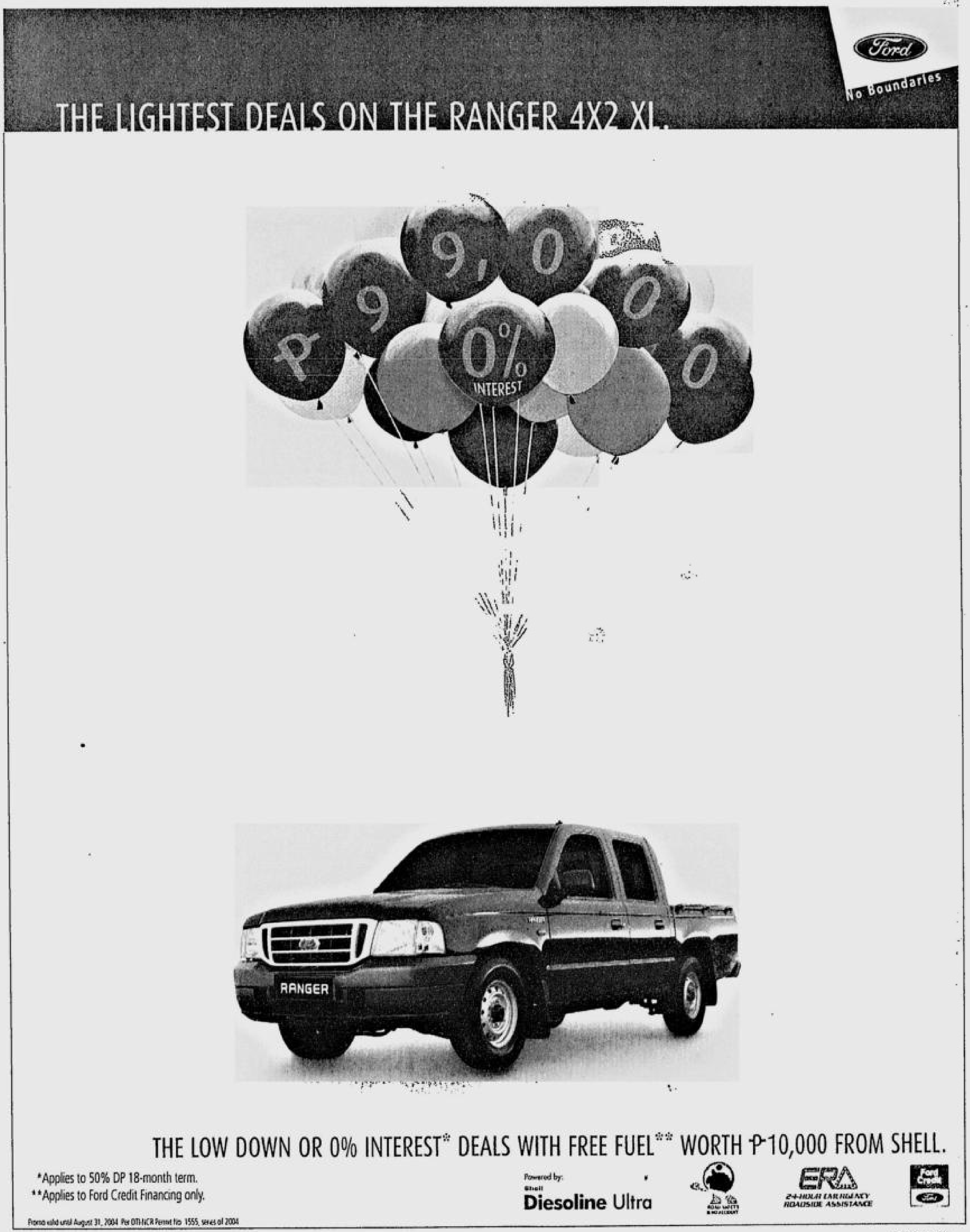
Passing on the burden

But the militant group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) is not at all impressed with what the government claims are solutions to the looming power crisis.

The national government's commitment to absorb P500 billion of Napocor's debts will only lead to nothing but higher power rates, said Renato Reyes Jr., Bayan spokesperson.

He said not only would the government's budget deficit balloon even more with the assumption of these debts, the public would even-

NAPOCOR/ B2



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Infra raid

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

LIKE most people sucking up to this cute administration of Gloriaetta, I surely can use an extra P3 billion worth of projects.

That's why, from now on, I think I shall also dip my hands, plus some other implement, in this thing called Sctep (pronounced as "sctep").

It actually stands for Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project. Five years in the making, it is the flagship venture of the BCDA in Central Luzon.

Perhaps, Sctep is the single most important road project under this infrastructure-challenged cute administration. Gloriaetta comes from the region.

But bad press now hounds the project. Reports went all over press town, accusing the BCDA of corruption.

Sctep, according to reports quoting public officials, was overpriced. Ergo, somebody must be making a lot of money. Can I advance my share, boss?

* * *

ANYWAY, it seems that the Neda originally approved the P15-billion cost for Sctep in 1999. How come the project now costs P25 billion?

Well in 2000, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, or the JBIC, the financier of the project, asked for changes in the design.

Those changes brought up the cost to P19 billion. Still, Neda approved the new higher estimated cost.

By bidding time in September last year, the peso had depreciated and the prices of construction materials had gone amuck.

Those things brought up the construction cost by about P8 billion. All told, the construction should now cost some P25 billion. Clear, *manong?*

In fact, P27 billion was the lowest bid for the project. Now where did all that claim of overpricing in media come from?

***

WORD is going around in business that somebody who is well known in the construction business, is raiding this key infra project, threatening to sue the BCDA over the Sctep.

Said to have received the same not-so-veiled threat was Romulo Neri, economic planning secretary and head of the National Economic and Development Authority. Remember: Neda has the clout in infra projects.

But what is this I hear: our famous local contractor has teamed up with a Japanese company for the Sctep bidding? Unfortunately, they only landed a far third.

Now our hero is going to town, saying that the project is overpriced. He allegedly has sympathetic ears in Neda, Congress and, perhaps even Malacañang. Hmm.

Nobody is saying anything about how one of his close relations approached the winner of the bidding to ask for about P3 billion worth of ... well, "sub-contracts."

But the winning bidder, a big Japanese group, gave the handsome devil a resounding "no."

No wonder, all of a sudden, the project is overpriced. What a country!

***

BY ITS name alone, Sctep seems to symbolize what has been lacking in Central Luzon—a big step forward.

Central Luzon has been left behind by the Calabarzon. For the past 14 years, nothing much has happened, except the devastation from that big ash-hole Mt. Pinatubo.

Sctep will link up the former US military bases in Subic and in Clark—something investors have been clamoring for the past 15 years.

With Sctep, those two special economic zones can generate all sorts of industries and, thus, create all sorts of support businesses.

As it is, all the factories in Metro Manila are stymied by heavy traffic due to narrow roads, not to mention the lack of space due to high real estate prices.

Really, just try loading your goods into container vans for export shipment in the metropolis.

You have to remove thousands of cars and jeepneys that are parked at the side of the street of your factory, plus of course a couple of houses in the middle.

* * *

BUT in fairness, the Neda does not question the need for the project, whether under Neri or his predecessors. Everybody wants it to push through.

It's just that, this late in the game, Neri all of a sudden is going for a re-bidding of the project, which can delay it by three to six years.

For instance, Neri wants BCDA to change the source of funding, from the present Obuchi Fund to a regular yen loan package.

The big difference is, under the Obuchi arrangement, the BCDA is required to get a Japanese contractor. The regular yen loan does not have such a condition.

If Neri would have his way, he would pave the way for the locals to get the same contract, including that scheming local contractor who specializes in government projects.

And if we follow Neri's bright idea, the project will be completed, at the earliest, 10 years from now. That is, if we are lucky!

By that time, Vietnam will have overtaken us, and we will be sending our school teachers to become yayas and maids in Ho Chi Minh.

* * *

NOT only that, the bright idea also entails additional costs. With the delay in the project, we must shoulder additional financial charges of more than P1 billion.

Yet nobody can give any assurance—not Neri, not the scheming contractor, and certainly not his political lackeys—that the cost will go down with the so called re-bid.

On the other hand, while it was accused of corruption, the BCDA at least is seen trying to negotiate with the lowest bidder.

The idea is to bring down the bid near the P20 billion which the Neda approved. BCDA Rufo Colayco is leading the negotiations. He is, by the way, a technocrat.

Colayco has been an executive in the private sector all his life, until the man named Band . . . Wrist Band . . . forced him to join the government.

Even under this cute administration, it is said that Gloriaetta has a lot of respect for him. This is the guy they are insinuating to be corrupt.

* * *

SO who will win—the technocrat or the schemer? Well, it is said that our beloved contractor has the ears of politicos because he is a usual suspect when it comes to campaign contributors.

Moreover, another politico from the north, who used to be a good friend of Wrist Band, is said to be after Colayco. Guess why? For the same project.

We shall known him only as Mr. Sabit. Insiders in this cute administration say that Mr. Sabit also wants the road project. You know—for a little sideline!

In fairness, however, Gloriaetta is said to have put her foot down. She already told Mr. Sabit that he cannot touch Sctep.

As for the head of Colayco, another business powerhouse, the Ayala group, already made it known to Malacañang that they will be happy to see a "seasoned" executive at the helm of BCDA.

BCDA, in case you forget, is in charge of Fort Bonifacio. The Ayala group has a huge project there. And the group is not exactly, er, estranged with the Palace.

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7-mo. BOP deficit hits $95M

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S balance of payments position posted a deficit of $95 million from January to July this year, owing to foreign exchange outflows to cover public sector debt servicing.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reported that the country incurred a deficit of $163 million for July alone, bringing the seven-month deficit to $95 million.

The January to July deficit, however, still represented an improvement from the $234 million shortfall during the same period last year.

The country chalked up monthly BOP surpluses from March to May this year. As such, the April to June BOP position remained positive.

"This is due to debt repayments, which were reflected as outflows in the capital account," said Amando Tetangco Jr., BSP officer-in-charge. "They were principal repayments by the GOCCs (government-owned and -controlled corporations)."

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the local economy and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

The current account records trade in goods and services, as well as transfers, while the capital and financial account records loan transactions, investment flows, short-term capital and other related items.

Any transaction where a Philippine resident has to make a payment, like importation or offshore investment, is a deficit item. On the other hand, any transaction which gives rise to a receipt, like exporting or inward remittance and investment, is a surplus item.

Tetangco said the BSP expected a surplus in the current account, but the country would end up with a deficit for the full year due to outflows from debt repayments.

"Exports are improving and remittances from overseas Filipino workers are also improving," he said.

In July, the country's gross international reserves likewise dipped to a five-month low of $15.99 billion due to the debt servicing requirements of the national government and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The end-July GIR marked a 1.2-percent decline from the end-June level of $16.18 billion.

This brought the BSP's net international reserves as of end-July—inclusive of revaluation of reserve assets and reserve-related liabilities—to $13.78 billion or about $93 million lower than the end-June level of $13.88 billion.

The International Institute of Finance, a global association of top financial institutions, projected that some $3 billion in capital would flow out of the Philippines this year and in 2005 due to a dearth of onshore investment opportunities.

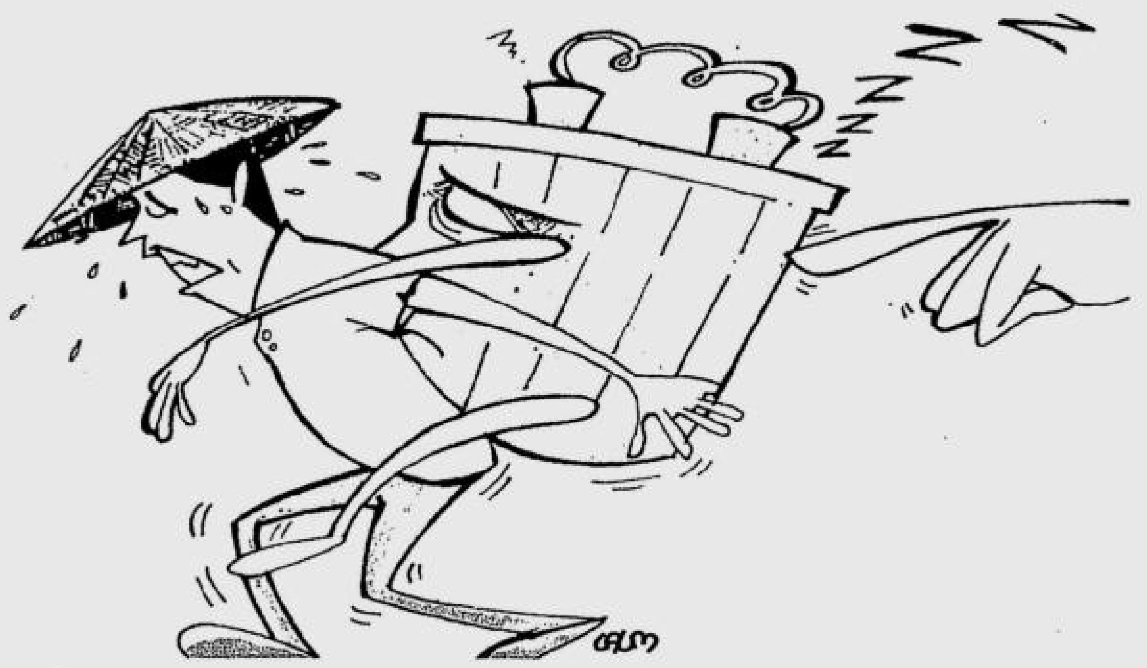
In a country report issued in July, the IIF said Philippine residents would likely favor offshore dollar-denominated financial instruments especially amidst the narrowing of interest rate differentials between domestic and global interest rates.

"The outlook for residents, including the domestic banks, to continue accumulating assets abroad points to capital outflows that average about $3 billion a year in 2004 and 2005," the IIF paper read.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, for its part, strives to avoid monetary tightening despite the expected uptrend in global interest rates starting this year. BSP officials believe that higher interest rates will only hurt the domestic economy, even as inflationary pressures set in from supply side factors, such as rising oil prices.

But despite the projected capital outflows, the IIF said there should be minimal impact on the country's BOP.

"The drain on the balance of payments from capital outflows should be covered by the current account surplus to stabilize official foreign exchange reserves at $13-14 billion," the paper said.



Napocor: A cross RP has to bear

From page B1

tually end up paying those debts.

"The public will be paying for these debts through the mechanism known as universal charge (a component of their electric bill), which will be paid (over) the next 25 years," Reyes said.

"These debts were not incurred by the public but by Napocor when it entered into onerous contracts with independent power producers during the 1990s. It is unconscionable to pass these debts to the public via higher electricity rates."

Blaming the IPPs

According to Reyes, the public has been paying for unutilized electricity as a result of hastily approved contracts with IPPs during the Ramos administration—the height of the power plant boom.

Since the early '90s when most of the existing contracts with IPPs were forged, much of the capacity put in place by these power firms, mostly foreign, had not been fully utilized.

The burden of paying for unused electricity has been placed on the shoulders of the Filipino people, Reyes said. The IPPs, on the other hand, just continue to reap the benefits—windfalls worth millions of pesos—of those hastily approved contracts.

But an official from one of the IPPs said it was just a classic case of lack of communication between government and the consuming public.

According to the industry source, government should have exerted more effort in explaining to the people why the country has all this excess capacity. The authorities should also explain how, despite the amount of supposed unutilized power, the threat of a power shortfall could still exist.

"It is really difficult for the public to understand why the price of a certain commodity is high when there is oversupply," the source said. "Government should have exerted more effort to explain the situation instead of deny it by imposing a price cap which we have to pay later in the form of taxes."

In a nutshell, the power oversupply that resulted from the massive power plant build-outs of the early '90s was totally unintentional, the source explained.

It may sound like a self-serving explanation to some but it is something that the public, including the militant groups and the consumer watchdogs, have to accept, the source added.

"We have to tell the public that due to the financial crisis of 1997, the requirements for electricity did not materialize as projected during the early '90s," the IPP official said. "But we have to pay for the amortization of the power plants that we built whether we use them or not."

So in the grand scheme of things, the source said, the public should not blame the IPPs for the high cost of power. The price of power now, as it is, does not even reflect the true cost of generation.

Falling into another trap

Reyes warned that the government could again fall into the trap of hastily approving IPP contracts—at the expense of the Filipino people.

The possibility of a power crisis, which the government has been using to justify the privatization of Napocor and the need for new capacity, may likely give the government another excuse to enter into "onerous contracts."

The contracts, Reyes said, could turn into sources of "bureaucratic corruption."

But according to Lotilla, government has surely learned its lesson from the past, and that history is not bound to repeat itself this time around.

"Time, right now, is still on our side," Lotilla said. "We have time in which to avoid panic planning. We won't be forced into a situation where we must build, and the cost is determined purely by the private sector investor."

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez also said that the government was doing what needed to be done—making Napocor more efficient and working toward jacking up power rates—to prevent a repeat of the early '90s situation.

He explained that the IPP negotiations of the early '90s were done "under a time-is-of-the-essence urgency," something that should not be repeated this time.

"So long as we still have some time left, we have more options," Perez said. "We should avoid finding ourselves with our backs against the wall, where we have to get electricity no matter how expensive it is. We have to start working now."

Even Allan Paul Flake, vice president of of the country's largest IPP, Mirant Philippines Corp., believes that "the era of the IPPs is over."

With the enactment of the Epira, the power industry is now a completely new arena, he said.

"The marketplace is different in many ways now from what it was during the '90s," Flake said. "And the new market structure calls for more private sector participation and competition in the supply side."

(To be continued)

BSP to probe trust activities of banks

From page B10

agreements (repos) and trust activities.

Although the BSP is now using an inflation-targeting approach to monetary policy, it is still important for the agency to recognize undocumented sources of liquidity, the official said.

In the case of undocumented repos, the official said there were reports that some banks were raising funds using its holdings of securities holdings. However, the securities were not being delivered to the client.

These transactions refer to the purchase of securities with the agreement to sell them at a higher price at a future date.

"There's no stopping the bank from selling the same securities to other parties over and over again," the official said.

Although the banks eventually settle the transactions, the official said the funds raised prior to maturity could be used to take a speculative position on the local currency.

The official hopes that the creation of a fixed income exchange will address concerns on the proliferation of these under-the-table repos.

Trust instruments are another source of undocumented liquidity, said the official.

These instruments, which are estimated at P700 billion, are not under the jurisdiction of the BSP. Banks themselves market common trust funds, of which the outstanding amount is currently at P200 billion.

PDIC insurance cap now ₱250K

THE LAW increasing the insurance coverage for deposits from P100,000 to P250,000 took effect last Wednesday.

Republic Act No. 9302, which amended the Charter of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC), provides higher protection to some 26 million depositors and strengthens the capabilities of the PDIC to promote greater public confidence in banks.

PDIC insurance covers 96 percent of the total number of deposit accounts in the banking system. The increase in the insurance coverage insures 96 percent of the total number of deposit accounts in the banking system.

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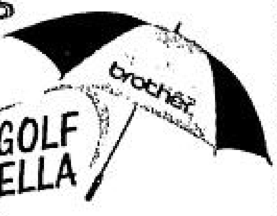

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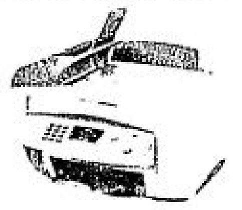

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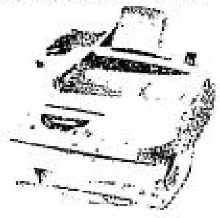

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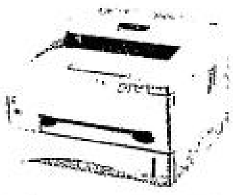

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Dividend season in full swing

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

LAST week, I told you that I was going to have a vasectomy. Well, what happened was so embarrassing that I don't want to write about it, but I suppose I have a duty to my readers. As you all know, when you grow older, everything gets smaller, and if you don't use it, you lose it. So when I went to the hospital, the doctors couldn't find it. The chief surgeon, whose eyesight is very poor, found a magnifying glass but to no avail. The electron microscope was being used and an MRI would be too expensive so an intern gave me some Viagra and sent for a stripper from a club where he was a member.

She did an exotic dance on the table and as the drug took effect, it began to grow. At first, all that could be seen was TITOMFSFLS, but as it steadily expanded, it read "This is the original model for Smokey's foot-long sausage, 1980. For further details ring 800-1279-43289." The nurse took one look at it and said, "it's gruesome." "Yes," I said, "it certainly has." Then they made the cut and circumcised me so I returned home 5 pounds lighter.

On Friday afternoon, a high-ranking official from the INQUIRER called me and said that they were concerned about the safety of their columnists. He said, "forewarned is forearmed," and next minute, there were four armed men outside my house. They put bulletproof windows on my car and a Beretta in both glove compartments so I had twin car Berettas.

Then I had to wear a Kevlar vest and learn to fire an Uzi. I have never held a gun before, as they are not allowed in England, even for the police. I went to the firing range and shot a 4-under par 68. I also shot a pigeon but when it fell to earth, it was an eagle. I felt bad because that is your national emblem but the chief inspector said, "No doubt it looked like a pigeon. Eagles are masters of de skys."

I tried to enter the Olympics. There is no official age limit but they discourage people over 70. They would not let me throw the hammer because I am a hammerteur, and as for the discus, they would not even discuss it. A Filipina, who failed to qualify for the breaststroke was later told that she could have used her arms as well. The 100-meter hurdles have been stretched to 106 meters to allow for inflation. A request from the Philippines to include 9-ball pool in the pool events was denied. The decathlon has been decaffeinated.

***

ANY READER who missed any of my last three articles can get them from money@inq7.net or business@inquirer.com.ph. Please do not ask me for tips or to review your stocks as I am receiving 30 e-mails a day.

As we are in the middle of the dividend season, I would like to comment on some of the results. TEL announced first-half profits of P12 billion, exactly in line with my forecast. Then they spoilt it by saying there would be a slowdown in the second half and that their estimate for 2004 remained at P22 billion. I can accept that the third quarter will be lower than the second, which was augmented by the election campaign. But the fourt quarter includes Christmas and is traditionally the best quarter. So I am looking for at least P23 billion and possibly P24 billion. SMART will have the benefit of the tax losses of PLTL but I have not included it.

GLOBE did better than analysts were expecting and added 1.4 million new subscribers in the second quarter, far more than the 900,000 that was expected. They appear to have corrected the mistakes of the first quarter, and they are forecasting at least P14 billion with no slowdown in the second half. They are paying a final dividend of P18, in addition to the P18 interim already paid; so this puts them on a yield of 4 percent.

I think this is a credible recovery that will probably continue, but I still prefer TEL because they have more imagination, which keeps them ahead of the curve. Their latest scheme for 7 million overseas workers to remit earnings using in Money Card is brilliant. It means that both sender and recipient have to have a Money Card, so it will take a while to implement. But once this is done, the money is transferred faster, safer and cheaper than by any other method. This should prove to be a money-making scheme. The banks will be the losers.

The 21 percent increase in sales by ALI was very respectable at the lower end of the market, but margins are much lower so the rise in net profit was only 7 percent. ALI is essentially a long-term investment as the Ayala family is willing to plan 15 to 20 years ahead. They said last year that their huge investment in Fort Bonifacio would take that long to produce the maximum return. So for long-term, ALI is the greatest but in the short-term, it is unexciting. Next year should show a double-digit profit increase.

The 90-percent increase in the first half of the AC was due to the 50-percent increase in GLO and the 46-percent surge in BPI's second quarter. I have consistently written that AC is a better investment than ALI, and nearly two years ago I recommended switching from ALI to AC. ALI was over P1.40 higher, and since then, AC has given a 20-percent stock dividend. So if you had followed this advice, you would be 50 percent better off. GLO is paying large dividends to AC just as SMART is doing with TEL, and for the same reason, to pay down their dollar debt. The telecom sector remains the best for the long term.

SMPH second quarter profit was up 11 percent, and for the half year, it is up 10 percent, par for the course. The stock is totally predictable and you can rely on a 10-percent growth for the next five years. Apart from opening three malls this year, the first phase of the Mall of Asia will be ready for the last quarter of 2004. The company is spending P5 billion on expansion but they have the cash to fund it. This should prove a major tourist attraction and a well-situated shopping center. SMPH is one of the few companies that pay regular dividends and this year, it paid a special dividend.

The results for JFC were excellent. JFC announced a third straight quarter profit record, helped by sales in the election period. The second quarter income was up 37 percent from P342 million to P468 million. This was well ahead of analysts' estimates. Sales were up 30 percent and this is a good defensive stock. However, it has risen by 40 percent this year, making it the top performer among the leaders.

The Shanghai-based Yonghe King is doing very well. It has 91 outlets and with China growing at a cracking pace, disposable incomes are rising. The board of JFC is considering a separate board to run the subsidiary and in due course, the tail might wag the dog.

Wall Street's massive trade deficit for July was a record $58.8 billion, far in excess of analysts' worst nightmare. Imports were up and exports were down. On Thursday, all the US indices hit a low for the year and all the Asian and European markets, except ours, followed.

Consumer prices rose 6 percent in July and will be higher in August, yet the government insists that inflation will remain below 5 percent for the year. Oil prices make new highs daily and the central bank has admitted that it might have to raise rates next year. This is a no-brainer and for every 1-percent increase, the government will have to pay an extra P16 billion in interest. The PHISIX has dissociated itself from the rest of the planet. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

T-bill rates rise across the board

By Michelle V. Remo

TREASURY bill rates yesterday rose across the board, with the yield on the benchmark 91-day debt paper increasing by 5.8 basis points to 7.183 percent.

The 91-day treasury bill yield is used by banks as a benchmark in pricing their loans.

Although banks sought a higher risk premium, they showed strong appetite for the three-month debt paper with tenders reaching P5.33 billion, compared with the government's offering of only P4.5 billion.

The rate for the 182-day T-bill slightly rose by 2.2 basis points to 8.208 percent. The market's appetite for the six-month debt paper was also strong as bids reached P4.69 billion, compared with the P3.5-billion offering of the government.

The 364-day T-bill also fetched a higher rate of 9.281 percent yesterday, which was 10.5 basis points higher than its previous rate. Tenders for the one-year government security reached P3.76 billion, or higher than the government's offering of P3 billion.

"I don't know why they (the banks) were trying to push interest rates up. We should not be accepting much higher rates because the market is still very liquid at this time," said National Treasurer Mina Figueroa, who heads the Bureau of Treasury's auction committee.

Because of the high offers, the auction committee made only a partial award of the bids. It, however, failed to raise the amount of borrowings it had planned.

For the 91-day T-bills, the government accepted only P3.76 billion worth of offers, lower than the original borrowing schedule of P4.5 billion. For the 182-day T-bills, only P3.26 billion of the bids were accepted, lower than the P3.5 billion that the government had intended to raise. For the 364-day T-bills, the government raised only P2.89 billion, or lower than its original schedule of P3 billion.

Figueroa said the government could afford to reject bids, as its cash position remained healthy.

In the meantime, the international finance community is awaiting the decision of the US Federal Reserve on whether to raise again its interest rates.

The US Federal Reserve has recently raised by a quarter-of-a-percentage point its interest rates, fueling speculations that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas might also raise its lending and borrowing rates. The BSP, however, said it was not inclined to follow moves of the US Fed.

JFC profit up 36.8% in Q2

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp., the country's top fast food chain, yesterday said its net profit rose 36.8 percent in the second quarter, boosted by spending related to the May national elections.

The company, whose hamburgers and chicken are more popular locally than those of McDonalds and KFC, said its net profit reached P468.5 million in the second quarter from P342.55 million in the same period a year ago.

For the first half, Jollibee—which has expanded from a small hamburger chain into fried chicken, pizza, pasta and Chinese food—had net income of P850.6 million against P612.36 million a year ago.

The company earlier said it expected to record a second-quarter profit growth of as high as the 42-percent jump posted in the first three months of the year from the same period in 2003, backed by strong consumer spending on food and drinks during the May polls.

Jollibee shares jumped 43.3 percent in the three months to June, outperforming the main index which rose 10.89 percent in the same period. *Reuters*

Oil price . . .

From page B1

The all-shares index rose 3.50 points at 1,002.09 as commercial-industrials went up 13.41 to 2,545.93, but property fell 4.91 to 522.55. Mining was down 22.82 at 1,965.95, and oil was down 0.03 at 1.59 but banking and financial services advanced 0.08 to 457.28.

"The market remains largely in consolidation mode, and today it was supported mainly by gains in telecom stocks and a few other blue chips," said Ron Rodrigo of Accord Capital Equities.

"Worries about high oil prices, and their impact on companies' profitability going forward, especially those in manufacturing and services, are still a major drag on equities markets," he added.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) led the topped turnover, up P30 at P1,300. *AFP*

Benpres posts net loss of ₱191M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LOPEZ-LED Benpres Holdings Corp. reported a net loss of P191 million in the first half of the year, reflecting a deterioration from an income of P43 million in the previous year.

For the same period, revenue dropped to P3.79 billion this year from P4.153 billion last year.

Net sales and services dropped 8 percent to P2.55 billion, reflecting the decline in the revenue of Maynilad brought about by lower billed volume.

Total expenses slipped to P4.34 billion in the first half from P4.48 billion.

Broadcast subsidiary ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. posted a 10-percent revenue growth to P6.6 billion, with its net income rising by 10 percent to P560 million.

FPHC booked a profit of P1.976 billion in the first half, 2 percent more than the previous year's level.

Water distributor Maynilad's financial performance remains consolidated under Benpres due to the latter's 59-percent ownership in the water utility.

In the meantime, property firm Megaworld Corp. said its net profit rose 14 percent to P398.9 million in the first half from P350.7 million.

Total revenue grew to P767.9 million from P724.3 million largely on sales of its condominium projects at Eastwood City in Quezon City, Fort Bonifacio and Makati.

Its operating expenses grew to P284.2 million from P267 million due mainly to the increase in marketing and selling expenses

Port operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI), for its part, said its foreign operations boosted its first half profit by 101 percent to P446 million, from P222 million in the same period last year.

Its second quarter profit rose 135 percent to P280 million from P119 million.

Total revenues for the first half swelled 23 percent to P4.2 billion from P3.4 billion last year.

PPI puts up ₱200-M subsidiary

PACIFIC Plans Inc. has put up a P200-million subsidiary, Lifetime Plans, to handle its fixed-value pre-need educational, pension and memorial plans.

The move is part of the structural reorganization of PPI. It is in line with the current industry practice of focusing on fixed-value plans, which pre-determine the amount of benefits due a plan holder upon maturity.

PPI executive vice president Liwayway F. Gener said the industry had shifted from traditional or non-fixed-value plans whose benefits were determined only at the time they are needed such as during school enrollment.

PPI stopped selling these traditional educational plans in 1992 shortly after a government policy allowed schools to raise tuition without any cap. In 2002, the Securities and Exchange Commission announced that it would disallow the sale of these open-ended educational plans.

Lifetime will absorb the fixed-value plans of PPI, giving it a starting plan holder base of 423,000.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 16, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17	17.25	30,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41	41	41	41	199,900
China Banking Corp.	535	535	535	535	520
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	39.5	39.5	39.5	39.5	1,200
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	25.5	26	430,800
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	2,600
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	50,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	15,600
Security Bank Corp.	22	22	22	22	163,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	24	24	1,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2200	2210	2200	2210	140
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	25,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	115	115	115	115	100
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1490	1495	1490	1490	470
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	21	21	21	21	8,900
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	4,140,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	910	915	910	915	80,040
Ipeople Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.46	385,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	310,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	35,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.65	18,028,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	230,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1300	1300	1295	1300	108,370
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.71	0.66	0.66	3,560,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	9,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15.75	15	15	98,500
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	24	23.25	23.75	1,054,200
Petron Corp.	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.7	796,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	51,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	122,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.55	33,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	1,800,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	530,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.78	1.78	1,390,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	9,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30	30.5	47,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	25.5	26	25.5	25.5	76,900
RFM Corp.	0.82	0.89	0.8	0.84	450,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.33	0.33	440,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57	57.5	57	57.5	11,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70.5	70	70.5	2,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.31	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	21,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	3,232,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	730,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	500,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	15,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.54	1.56	1.4	1.4	60,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.06	1.02	1.02	78,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	41,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.53	0.51	0.52	10,750,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.125	0.125	1,700,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.21	0.21	1,240,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	400,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.42	1.48	1.3	1.38	9,343,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	3,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	10,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.25	3.05	3.25	17,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24.25	23.75	23.75	395,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.0825	0.075	0.075	42,300,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	200,000
Ionics Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.3	1.32	767,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	50,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.26	1.26	229,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	2,600,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	600,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	1,321,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.32	14,780,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	110,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	0.15	1,740,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	900,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Jardine Davies Inc.	25	25	25	25	200
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.44	1.48	1.44	1.44	121,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	2,500,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.73	0.76	0.7	0.7	20,870,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	25,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	160,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	33,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	21	21	21	21	243,600
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	490	490	490	4907	50
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	748,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.52	690,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.25	2,630,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	3,000,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.97	0.98	0.97	0.97	360,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	1,300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	245,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	3,631,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	140,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	10,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0046	0.0048	0.0046	0.0046	192,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	177,000
Benguet Corp. A	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	80,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	12,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,210,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	550,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	150,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	203,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	200,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.38	1,150,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	190,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0036	0.0034	0.0036	62,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	54,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	420,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.4	2.4	2	2	557,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	200,000

DISCLOSURES

APC Group Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from Sept. 9 to Oct. 15.

* * *

EVER Gotesco Resources and Holdings Inc. postponed its annual stockholders' meeting originally set for last Friday of August to a later date.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. bought 203,000 of its own shares at P1.32 per share.

* * *

MABUHAY Holdings Corp. disclosed the resignation of Esperanza Molina-Dela Cruz as treasurer and finance manager of the company. Araceli Canlas Molina was elected to replace and serve the unexpired term of Dela Cruz.

* * *

METRO Alliance Holdings and Equities Corp. reported a second quarter unaudited consolidated net loss of P35 million mainly due to interest on various bank loans. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

August 16, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.808080808	1.000000	55.7260
Japan	Yen	0.007302	0.009036	0.5035
United Kingdom	Pound	1.490263	1.844200	102.7699
Hongkong	Dollar	0.103616	0.128225	7.1455
Switzerland	Franc	0.652467	0.807428	44.9947
Canada	Dollar	0.617374	0.764000	42.5747
Singapore	Dollar	0.471734	0.583771	32.5312
Australia	Dollar	0.578647	0.716076	39.9041
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.143564	2.652661	147.8222
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215483	0.266660	14.8599
Brunei	Dollar	0.470361	0.582072	32.4365
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000087	0.000108	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.01946	0.024082	1.3420
UAE	Dirham	0.220011	0.272264	15.1722
Euro	Euro	1	1.237500	68.9609
Argentina	Peso	0.268688	0.332502	18.5290
Brazil	REAL	0.2674	0.330907	18.4401
Denmark	Kroner	0.134467	0.166403	9.2730
India	Rupee	0.017472	0.021622	1.2049
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212681	0.263193	14.6667
Mexico	New Peso	0.071053	0.087928	4.8999
New Zealand	Dollar	0.537038	0.664584	37.0346
Norway	Kroner	0.120835	0.149533	8.3329
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013754	0.017021	0.9485
South Africa	Rand	0.125046	0.154744	8.6233
Korea	Won	0.000695	0.000860	0.0479
Sweden	Kroner	0.108398	0.134142	7.4752
Syria	Pound	0.019585	0.024237	1.3506
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023767	0.029412	1.6390
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000422	0.000522	0.0291

Gov't plans new tax on imports of used vehicles

By Ronnel W. Domingo

MALACAÑANG is expected to issue in October an executive order that would create separate tariff headings for used vehicles in an effort to quell the flood of imports at the expense of local assemblers.

According to a source familiar with the matter, the order would remove used vehicles—which are currently treated duty-wise as brand new ones—from the list of items under the Tariff and Customs Code to allow for the creation of the new headings.

Under EO 156, which provides for a comprehensive industrial policy and directions for the motor vehicle development program, vehicles are classified only as either a passenger car or commercial vehicle.

"The government is looking into the possibility of imposing a surcharge in the form of a duty that would be based on the used vehicle's value when sold to the end-user," the source said.

The surcharge would be on top of the existing ad valorem tax, which is based on the importation cost.

The source said the surcharge rate had not been set and that the Tariff Commission was expected to conduct a public hearing on the matter.

Also, the source said the Department of Transportation and Communication has proposed to the Cabinet oversight committee on anti-smuggling that the registration of imported used vehicles should be based on the end-users purchase price rather than import cost.

Part of the EOs aims are the protection of the environment and public safety, the source added.

Early this month, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) expressed support for the government's renewed efforts to implement strictly the requirement for imports to have a certificate of compliance on emission standards from their country of origin.

Small oil firms urge gov't to sell 40% stake in Petron

By Abigail L. Ho

NEW oil players are pushing for the full privatization of Petron Corp. if only to prevent the government from exerting some form of "control" over local pump prices.

Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (Ippca) chair Fernando Martinez said Petron, 40-percent held by state-owned Philippine National Oil Co., could not fully play in a supposedly market-driven industry because of government ownership.

"Even that 40-percent ownership will temper the price of oil, so the pricing (in the industry) now is not really that free. It is tempered by the actions of Petron," he said in a briefing yesterday.

He pointed out that even developed economies like the United States did not own their oil firms so PNOC's divestment of its stake in Petron would be a step in the right direction.

Should the government refuse to unload its 40-percent share in the local oil giant, Martinez said the country should just as well go back to the regulated era, before RA 8479 or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act was signed.

"If the government will continue to use Petron to control prices, that's already regulation," he said. "As long as Petron is used as a leverage, prices will be tempered and even stock prices will be affected."

He said a regulated environment would be better at this point as oil firms would at least be assured of a 12-percent return on rate base, a measure of profitability.

Aside from a less controlled pricing environment, the government's divestment of its stake in Petron should also give it between P10 billion and P12 billion in additional cash, an amount that PNOC could use to bankroll more oil and gas exploration efforts.

Martinez also said that while the government held on to its Petron stake, potential new initial public offerings of other oil firms would hang in the balance.

Neda defends $503-M North Rail project

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority has defended the $503-million North Rail project, stressing the government observed prudence in approving the project contrary to claims that it was an absurd expenditure.

"The project offers very concessional terms, and it was a right move for the government to take advantage of this great opportunity," Neda Director General Romulo Neri said in a briefing yesterday.

The project, which will initially connect Caloocan and Bulacan through a rail-transport facility, will largely be funded by the Chinese government. The Export-Import Bank of China will shoulder $395 million, while the remaining amount will be sourced from commercial loans.

Neri said the Chinese government's offer for an official development assistance (ODA) to pursue the 32-kilometer first phase of the North Rail project was already the most attractive among the offers.

The Philippine government will only have to pay the Eximbank of China a 3-percent interest. The loan agreement also provides for a 15-year maturity and a four-year grace period.

The Neda chief noted that under an offer from the Japanese government, the Northrail project would cost about $1 billion for a 40-km stretch, and the government would have to shoulder a much higher interest and shorter loan maturity.

"The statements against the project were exaggerated," Neri said, referring to comments from the business sector that the government should slow down in pursuing the project because it might have adverse effects on the already precarious financial position of the government.

Neri, however, said the North Rail Project underwent strict evaluation of the Neda board before it was approved. He said the project was also necessary because the government badly needed to improve the country's infrastructure to move the economy forward.

The first phase of the North Rail project will be composed of six stations: Caloocan, Valenzuela, Marilao, Bocaue, Guiguinto and Malolos.

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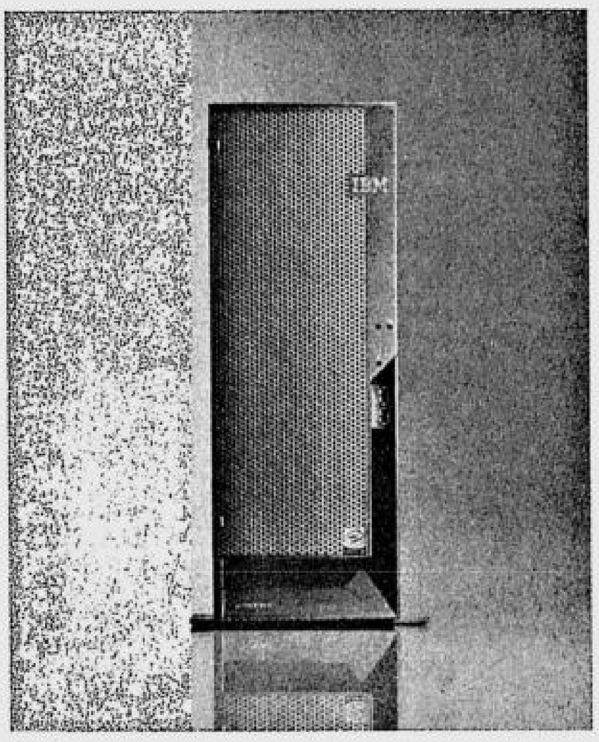

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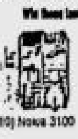

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See flyers for details.
* Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1491, Series of 2004

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UP TO Aug. 17, Microwarehouse, exclusive distributor of the Apple iPod, the hottest MP3 player, has a special treat for Fitness First members. All members of Fitness First can enjoy a special discount off their purchase on an iPod. A 20GB iPod's discounted price is P17,500 and 40GB iPod's discounted price is P23,000. For details, contact 637-0474 or visit Microwarehouse and look for Hope Constantino or Carlo Tan. Present your Fitness First membership and avail of the special discount.

'American Roadside Architeture' exhibit

US AMBASSADOR Francis Ricciardone launched Aug. 16 the "American Roadside Architecture" photo exhibit at the Grand Atrium of Shangri-La Plaza in Mandaluyong City. The exhibit is a collection of photographs by noted architectural historian John Margolies. The traveling exhibit will be on display at the Shaw Hallway of Shangri-La Plaza from Aug. 17 to 31; at SM City Cebu from Sept. 2 to 24; and at SM City Davao from Oct. 2 to 22.

Kadayawan Festival to feature Urog Etnika

MINDANAO'S best fashion, floral and make-up artists will vie for top honors in Urog Etnika in the 19th Kadayawan sa Dabaw on Aug. 18, from 6 p.m. at the SM City Davao Entertainment Plaza. As a conjunctive to the Hiyas sa Kadayawan, Urog Etnika will highlight locally woven fabrics, fibers and accessories and other materials endemic to Mindanao, which will be worn by the Hiyas finalists. For inquiries, call (082)-222-1956-57.

Bits Clips

Feast of St. Ezekiel Moreno

THE ORDER of Augustinian Recollects will commemorate the Feast of St. Ezekiel Moreno, its patron saint, on Aug. 19, with a solemn thanksgiving mass to be officiated by Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, D.D., Bishop of Caloocan, and concelebrated by Recollect Priests from all over the Philippines at the Parish Church of San Nicholas de Tolentino in Quezon City at 6 p.m. The same celebration occasions the launching of a documentary video entitled "Biyaheng Recoletos" showing the arrival of the first Recollect Missionaries in 1606.

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R-13 / FS : 11:20 am, 2:00 pm, 4:40 pm, 7:20 pm, LMF : 10:00 pm

3 (DOLBY) THE VILLAGE
PG-13 / FS : 12:45 PM, 3:20 PM, 5:55 PM, LMF : 8:40 PM

4 (DOLBY) CINDERELLA STORY
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7 GOLD (DOLBY) ELLA ENCHANTED
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'Rice is Life' photo contest

THE ASIA Rice Foundation (ARF) is inviting amateur and professional photographers and all photoclubs to encourage members to join the photo contest with the theme "Rice is Life," in celebration of the International Year of the Rice. The pictures to be submitted should include all aspects of rice from seedlings to planting, harvesting, bringing to market and to the dining table. Also rice cultural heritage like festivals, beliefs and rituals. Entries can be in color or black-and-white, 8 x 10 prints from negs; slides (35mm) or digital images from 300 dpi and above without alteration. It must have a title, place, date taken, name of photographer and address at the back. Entries may be submitted at MN PhotoPRo Rm. 227 LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo) Bel-Air II, Makati City, MM or mail at The Asia Rice Foundation, Los Banos, 403 Laguna, postmarked Aug. 17. More than one entry can be submitted by one person. Photographs must be original and have not been published. First prize is P25,000, second prize is P15,00 and third prize is P10,000. For inquiries contact 896-3208 or The Asia Rice Foundation's office at (63-49) 536-2285.

Centering Prayer

CENTERING Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our facilities to receive this gift. Centering Prayer is not meant to replace other kinds of prayers; rather it casts a new light and depth of meaning on them. It is at the same time a relationship with God and a discipline to foster that relationship. An introduction to Centering Prayer retreat presented by Contemplative Outreach Philippines will be held on Aug. 20 to 22, from 12 p.m. Friday to 12 p.m. Sunday at Bl. J. Marcelo Retreat House, Tagaytay City. For particulars call 842-0201 817-7251, 843-8291, 843-8830 (Jazmin).

Real estate seminars

ENTERPRISING individuals who want to earn big money for Christmas may attend any of the special real estate business opportunity seminars on Aug. 20 or 27, 1 to 5 p.m. at the Renaissance Towers, Meralco Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. The seminar will focus on the sales techniques including prospecting, effective sales presentations, handling objections, and closing sales. It will also focus on highly marketable real estate properties to ensure the participants immediate sales income. For inquiries, call Doris at 633-4197 or 0917-325-8805.

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Aries Espinosa

Equitable, American Express launch new gold card

IF EVERYTHING else that is bought goes well with a regular credit card, then it gets even better with gold.

Consumers wanting to explore their buying power may soon find their most reliable partner in the new Equitable Gold American Express Card, the latest and most innovative offering from the two leading institutions in the industry that is set to elevate the standards of the credit card industry to a new level.

Equitable Gold American Express Card boasts of an introductory Interest Rate of as low as 2.85 percent, Double Bonus E-points for all purchases, dining and shopping privileges alongside innovative and valued services to suit varying needs of consumers' sophisticated lifestyles. This card is set to reinvent the industry as it ensures that the market enjoys more perks and privileges faster than ever with its Double Bonus points feature, making every consumers' experience truly rewarding.

Deemed to become a major credit card in the country, Equitable Gold American Express Card also offers cardholders financial flexibility and quality rewards program designed to afford discerning cardholders great benefits and worthy credit options.

Launched on Aug. 10, at the Equitable Tower in Paseo de Roxas in Makati City, the new Equitable Gold American Express Card seals the significant partnership between Equitable and American Express Cards that has been nurtured for the past eight years. These two respected institutions has each earned a respective niche in the local and international banking and credit sectors for its long standing commitment to providing consumers creative ways to enjoy spending without tying them down to unreasonable payment schemes and limited choices.

The Equitable Gold American Express Card guarantees high acceptance in a wide range of commercial outlets throughout the Philippines and anywhere else in the world. American Express' global reach via the Global Network Services or GNS ensures easy purchases and payments for consumers during those hectic leisure or business travels. Equitable in turn, provides the growing local consumers the convenience of credit card usage.

While credit card remains an important part of consumers' spending lifestyles, the new Equitable Gold American Express Card guarantees more perks, choices and privileges for that ultintate buying experience.

Discover the new color of gold with the new Equitable Gold American Express Card and reward yourself. Apply now at any Equitable PCI branch or call 867-7977 (Metro Manila) or 1-800-1888-3264 (Domestic Toll Free).

GOOD EARTH TEAROOM OPENS IN ORTIGAS
Good Earth Tearoom's branch in Pasig was recently launched. Present during the soft opening and blessing were owners (from left): Vanessa Morales, Ria Castrillo, Anna Xerez-Burgos, Fr. Eugene Sta. Ana, Ginger Ignacio, and Sonja Ocampo (owner/partner not in photo are Tracy Ampil, Kathyrine Teves, Marge Lazatin, and Ana Martha Moreno). Good Earth Tearoom is known for their Asian Fusion cuisine by chef Henry Cheung. Some of Good Earth's specialties are Lily on the Pond, Popoy's Delight and Shantung Spicy Chicken. Good Earth Tearoom is located at Metro Walk along Meralco Ave, Pasig. For reservations, call 687-2881/757-4562.

Hope in controlling blood glucose

A NEW hope has been found for those suffering from type 2 Diabetes allowing them to enjoy an improved quality of life. Cogent db+, an herbal supplement made up of 9 medicinal plants, has been proven to have impressive rejuvenative properties that work directly on the cause of diabetes. Cogent db+ is based on the 5,000-year-old Indian Ayurveda medicinal system. Ayurveda has long been recognized as a major source of Western medicine due to the exchange of ideas between Indian and Western physicians in the 16th century. Ayurveda identified diabetes or madhumeha as far back as 3,000 years ago and had already developed herbal treatments for this disease. It is one of these formulas, discovered written an ancient palm leaf manuscript, that forms the basis for Cogent db+.

Since its discovery and initial development, Cogent db+ has been thoroughly tested for 11 years by eminent endocrinologists and physicians from renowned medical institutions in India, Malaysia, China, Australia, Russia and Sudan. Their favorable scientific findings are published in several authoritative journals, particularly the United States Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine 2002; 8(4): 445-457. It was found that those who took Cogent db had significantly lower fasting blood glucose, post-meal blood glucose, and insulin levels. The total cholesterol, triglycerides also improved in this group. None of the patients showed any toxicity, proving that the drug is safe. The severity of diabetes and the well being of those treated improved substantially. The nine ingredients in the herbal formulation of Cogent db+ work synergistically and they naturally possess anti-diabetic, anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant, and rejuvenative properties that show: 1. Anti-diabetic potential - able to lower elevated blood glucose; 2. Anti-inflammatory - works on the internal inflammatory conditions, repairing the pancreatic cell damage and reducing cellular resistance to insulin; 3. Rejuvenative property - helps in reversing necrosis (cell death) and tissue damage resulting from persistent hyperglycemia; 4. Blood purificatory ability- checks the progress of atherosclerotic (blockage of blood vessels) factors like hyperlipidemia (high lipids in the blood), lower micro-angiopathic lesions (small blood vessel injuries) that often leads to diabetic gangrene; 5. Helps diabetics combat lethargy and weakness and provide the body with strength to withstand infections associated with diabetes; 6. Prevents complications attributed to diabetes, which include blindness, renal failure, heart and peripheral neuropathy (nerve damage); 7. Enhances tissue response to insulin and effectively lowers triglycerides and cholesterol; 8. Sustains energy and promotes general well-being; 9. It is efficacious, safe and, reliable, with no side effects.

Cogent db+ is used as a supplemental herbal therapy to existing prescribed drugs. It has been successfully marketed in India, Malaysia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Russia, Japan, and Australia. It will soon be available here in the Philippines. Cogent db+ tablets come in blister packs of 30 (3x10). Diabetics need to take two tablets twice a day after meals for 1 moth, in order to see significant results. It is best complemented by exercise and a proper diet. Now, there is hope for controlling blood glucose for those suffering from type 2 diabetes.

For further information, please contact: Davenben Enterprises Corp, Unit 1907, Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, 1605 Philippines. Tel. nos. (02) 638-8573; (02) 631-9863; (02) 638-8379. Email: cogent@davenben.com or visit their Web site: www.davenben.com.

8TH DSAP NATIONAL CONVENTION
The Drugstores Association of the Philippines recently held its sponsors' briefing in connection with the 8th DSAP National Convention, which will be on Sept. 8 to 10 at the CAP-John Hay in Baguio City. Standing from left are: Bhoyet Vizconde, DSAP vice-president for internal affairs; Ely Rivero of United Laboratories; Jojo Fermin of Enervon; Joseph Carandang of Ceelin; Jet Lanting of Wyeth Consumer Healthcare; John Inocencio, DSAP ways and means chair; James Osorio of International Pharmaceuticals Inc; Hazel Flores of Nestle; Christine Espiritu of Celeteque. Seated (from left) are: Timmie Guillermo of Pharex Health Corp; Celia Carlos, DSAP national president; Gloria De Chavez, chair, DSAP Board; Karen Villanueva of Pfizer, and Loann Villanueva of GSK.

SUPER BOWL OF CHINA NOW IN SM FAIRVIEW
Super Bowl of China, the popular restaurant offering Asian, mainly Chinese dishes in an Asian-Western ambience is finally in Fairview, Quezon City. The newest branch is located at the ground floor of SM Fairview. Key officials of Super Bowl of China and Concept Bowl Foods Inc, the company that acquired the franchise, met to formalize the franchise agreement. Shown in photo during the contract signing are (from left): Benjamin Loo, Concept Bowl Foods Inc president; Richmond Yang, Big Buddha Restaurant Inc, managing director; and Rachel Fallarme, Super Bowl of China operations director. For franchising inquiries, call Richmond Yang at 747-2125.

Better living starts in Fitness First

THE NO. 1 global fitness company opens its latest world-class health club east of Metro Manila. The new club is located at Robinsons Metro East Mall and is bound to change the locale's fitness scene.

Fitness first has over 400 clubs and 1 million members spread across Asia, Australia, Continental Europe and the UK Originally founded in the UK in 1993, it has now grown to 17 countries worldwide, with rapid expansion plans for Asia in the coming few years. Here in the Philippines, there are now 7 high-end club conveniently located in strategic areas all over Metro Manila, with more coming before this year ends.

For those who enjoy exercising as part of a group, be instantly motivated by the extensive range of group fitness classes, from Spinning, Step First and Yoga to the world-famous Les Mills group exercise classes such as Body Pump, Body Jam, Body Balance and Body Combat.

The Cardio Theater is for fitness buffs that are more inclined towards cardiovascular and weight training equipment. It is the ultimate in exercise entertainment that allows one to watch TV from the comfort of a treadmill.

Those who need extra motivation can consult any of the club's qualified personal trainers who are on hand to help members achieve their health and fitness goals.

And if it's pampering that a member seeks, Fitness First boasts of its Body Care Centers (not available in some clubs), which offer the latest in relaxation facilities, from massages and saunas to aromatherapy and beauty therapy.

Check the website at www.fitnessfirst.com.ph for more information on all clubs located in Alabang, Greenhills, ABS-CBN, Fort Bonifacio, Robinsons Summit Tower, Eastwood City, Ayala Center Cebu (opens in November) and Fitness First Plus at RCBC Plaza.

CIT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
Shown are Chamber of International Trade president Ceferino Benedicto and PCCI president Sergio Ortiz Luis Jr welcoming Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima to the general membership meeting of CIT at the Manila Yacht Club.

CPM SOCIETY INDUCTS NEW MEMBERS
The Certified Professional Marketers (Asia Pacific) Society of the Philippines recently inducted new members at the Manila Peninsula Hotel, Makati City. Photo shows CPM Society president Julie Lim (left) swearing in Renato S. Esguerra (center) as an honorary member and Edwin Mapanao as a regular member. Esguerra, a former president of the Philippine Marketing Association, was chair of the CPM career development program from 1996 to 2003, while Mapanao, marketing manager of Sariwanok Feeds Co Inc, recently passed the CPM examinations. The next examinations for CPM candidates will be conducted in Manila by the Asia Pacific Marketing Federation (APMF) through the PMA in October this year.

Zonta Metro Pasig hosts Gender Justice Awards

THE ZONTA Club of Metropolitan Pasig is hosting the Gender Justice Awards ceremony on Aug. 18, at Discovery Suites, Pasig City. Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr , who launched the project last Dec. 8, 2003 , will be the keynote speaker. Other distinguished guests include UP president Francisco Nemenzo Jr and chair of the Human Rights Commission Purificacion Quisumbing. The Gender Justice Awards is a joint project of the Zonta Club of Metro Pasig with the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) and the University of the Philippines Center for Women Studies (UP-CWS). The Philippine Daily Inquirer is a major sponsor and print media partner of the project. Also a sponsor is GMA Network. The ceremony will highlight the presentation of Most Outstanding Judge Award to Hon. Judge Ma. Nimfa Penaco-Sitaca of the Regional Trial Court, Branch 13 in Oroquieta, City , Misamis Occidental.

REAL BANK, 1521 REAL ESTATE CORP INK AGREEMENT
Real Bank recently signed an agreement with 1521 Real Estate Corp appointing the real estate company as its exclusive marketing arm for its Real Homes I housing project in Guiguinto, Bulacan. Signing (from left) are: Salvacion Carin, 1521 VP for sales and marketing; Boni Reyes, president of 1521 Real Estate Corp; Alfredo Barretto, president of Real Bank and Edgardo Ignacio, SVP of Real Bank. Second row are: Abelardo Villarosa, VP of Real Bank and Luis Vargas, director of Real Bank.

PHARMACEUTICAL EXECUTIVES OF THE PHILS ELECT NEW OFFICERS
The Pharmaceutical Executives of the Philippines (PEP) composed mainly of chief financial officers and finance directors/managers of forty-four leading pharmaceutical companies recently inducted their officers for 2004-2005 at Edsa Makati Shangrila Hotel. Reiner Gloor, chair of the committee on ethics of the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (Phap), inducted the PEP officers. Standing (from left): Janet Centeno of Stiefel Phils (director, professional development), Pocholo dela Cruz of Zuellig Pharma Corp (vice president), Nette Guttierez of OEP Phils Inc (outgoing president), Celia Aurellano of Pascual Laboratories Inc (incoming president), Perla San Juan of Otsuka Phils Pharma (secretary) and Sir Francis Perez of Boehringer Ingelheim (assistant treasurer). Not shown in the picture are Jesse Mendoza of Aventis Pasteur (treasurer) and Dimas Demeglio of Inter-Mftg Synergies (director, membership).

More PEP on page B6

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REQUIREMENTS
- Male, 25-35 yrs. old
- Graduate of BS Criminology
- Computer Literate
- Knows how to drive motorcycle and four-wheeled vehicle
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- Single, bet. 22-30 years old
- Knowledge in computer
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- Female with pleasing personality
- Can work under pressure

Bring resumé, transcript, clearances
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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on **August 26, 2004**, 2:00 p.m., Auditorium of the DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Avenue, Makati City for the following properties on CASH BASIS:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE			
MANILA			
MALO-02	3838 Mascardo St., Tejeros, Makati City	355 m² residential lot (TCT No. 219849) w/ bldg.	P 8,129,500.00
AM-ED-217	2072 Anonas St., Sta. Mesa	300.2 m² residential lot (TCT No. 245737) w/ bldg.	P 3,363,000.00
AM-PY-218	INA Exec. Homes I, Levitown Estate Subd., La Huerta, Parañaque City	190 m² residential lot (TCT No. 144520) w/ bldg.	P 864,075.00
AM-CP-219	Andora vs. Jackson Sts., Vista Verde Subd., Bo. Llano, Caloocan City	Residential lots: TCT No. C-348039 - 276 m² C-348031 - 190 m² C-349032 - 190 m²	 P 683,100.00 P 441,750.00 P 441,750.00
AM-PY-220	Congressional Model Subd., Camarin, Caloocan City	228 m² residential lot (TCT No. 334416)	P 383,040.00
BATANGAS			
AM-MC-221	Brgy. Alangilan, Batangas City	18,139 m² industrial lot (TCT No. 53085) w/bldgs. & impvts./Granty crane foundation	P 45,780,000.00
AM-JA-222	Along National Road, San Rafael, Sto. Tomas	1,185 m² residential-commercial lot (TCT No. T-86841) w/ bldgs. & freezing eqpt.	P 5,070,000.00
AM-PY-223	Brgy. Sta. Rita, Batangas City	2-adjoining semi-commercial lots (TCT Nos. T-43159 & 43160), total area of 590 m², w/ bldg.	P 1,911,000.00
BULACAN			
MALO-01	Bo. Catmon, Malolos City	4 adjoining commercial lots (TCT Nos. T-91884 & 91885) total area of 866 m²	P 19,052,000.00
CAVITE			
AM-ML-224	Bo. Iruhin, Tagaytay	1,500 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-36905)	P 3,701,810.00
AM-ML-225	Greenbreze Subd., Lancaan, Dasmariñas	200 m² residential lot (T-979115)	P 195,000.00
LAGUNA			
STR-02	Lot 1 Pcs-31598, unnamed road, Mercado Village, Pulong Sta. Cruz, Sta. Rosa	2,150 m² vacant commercial-residential lot (TCT No. T-385520)	P 32,250,000.00
AM-ML-226	Along Bonifacio St., Bgy. Sto. Niño Poblacion, Lumban	97 m² residential lot (TCT No. 200189) w/ 4-storey factory bldg.	P 1,733,000.00
AM-ML-227	L-23 B-2, San Pablo St., San Carlos Bgy. Village, Banay-banay, Cabuyao	66 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-536564) w/ bldg.	P 267,300.00
MISAMIS ORIENTAL			
CWB-035	Bo. Barra, Opol	35,046 m² institutional lot (TCT No. 37481) w/school bldgs. & imprvts., office eqpt. & furnitures	P 44,772,200.00
QUEZON			
AM-CP-228	Bgy. Cabuguang, Tagkawayan	2 adjoining lots (TCT Nos. T-367909 & 367910) total area of 408,846 m²	P 6,513,525.00
RIZAL			
AM-PY-229	Lincoln Drive, Mayamot, Antipolo City	8 industrial lots (TCT Nos. 317013 to 317020), total area of 5,029 m² w/ bldg.	P 5,557,090.00
AM-PY-230	Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo City	2 adjoining lots (TCT Nos. 373101 & 373102), total area of 2,537 m²	P 887,460.00
AM-PY-231	Bermudez Heights Subd., Bgy. San Isidro & Ibayo, Antipolo City	Subdivision Lots: TCT No. 403152 336 m² 403153 337 m² 403154 300 m² 403155 227 m² 403156 322 m² 403157 287 m²	 P 403,200.00 P 404,400.00 P 360,000.00 P 332,400.00 P 386,400.00 P 344,400.00
ZAMBALES			
AM-ED-232	Bo. Lucapon, Sta. Cruz	6,639 m² agro-residential lot (TCT No. 48082)	P 1,619,775.00
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)			
AM-MC-233	No. 2337 Dalaga St., Gagalangin, Tondo, Manila	Punch press, 7-mixers & material handling eqpt.	P 40,000.00 to 8,000,000.00
CWB-029	Bldg. 693 Gridley St., SRF Compound Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	Various machinery and equipment for food processing	P 11,000.00 to 6,675,000.00
AM-ML-234a	) Serg's Compound, Ortigas Avenue,) Pasig City	1-unit Hydrostatic Five-Roll Refiner, for chocolate masses, cream compds.	P 5,146,900.00
AM-ML-234b	)	1-lot Baker Perkins Chocolate Machine	P 913,100.00
AM-JA-235	No. 6 Banner St., Bagong Ilog, Pasig City	Shrinking machine and 2-hydraulic press	P 15,000.00 to 1,000,000.00
AM-ED-236	No. 617 Bagumbayan St., Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila	Offset press/setting/letter press machines	P 12,500.00 to 375,000.00
AM-ML-237	DBP Depot, Dona Severina, Parañaque City	Electric heating upsetter, welding machine, 2-nut tapping machine	P 8,400.00 to 249,440.00
AM-MC-238	L-3 B-5, Purok 4, Magsaysay, San Pedro, Laguna	Various chattels for molds and dies fabrication	P 60,000.00 to 236,200.00
AM-JA-239	Bgy. San Isidro, Minalin, Pampanga	Generating set, powder coating oven, shearing machine, hydraulic/power press	P 16,900.00 to 200,000.00
AM-JA-240	Along National Road, San Rafael, Sto. Tomas, Batangas	Pressure tank, 675 gal. cap	P 21,000.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2218/2252 for Code starting with AM; 926-1686 for CWB; 818-9511 local 1409 for MALO and 1428 for STR.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI - Aug. 16 & 17, 2004)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WANTED TO BUY

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Extrajudicial settlement among heirs of Angelina P. Alejo made & entered into by & among ; Lariza P. Alejo, Rolando P. Alejo, Maria P. Alejo, Liza P. Alejo, Leah P. Alejo, Rico P. Alejo of 144 Poblacion, Kawit, Cavite (PDI-Aug. 17, 24 & 31, 2004)

Notice is given that the estate of the late ELMER A. ASUNCION has been extrajudicially settled among his parents under Doc. #44 Page #10 Book #32 Series of 2004 of Notary Public Atty. Sinag O. Villareal o Antipolo City (PDI-Aug. 3, 10 & 17, 2004)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late AH WAH has been extrajudicially settle among the heirs under Doc. No. 276, Page No. 56, Book No. XXXII, Series of 2004, of Notary Public Sofronio C. Untalan Jr. of the City of Makati. (PDI-August 17, 24, 31, 2004)

P
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NDC

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

INVITATION TO BID

The **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC)** invites interested bidders for the sale of its property with a total area of 5,176 square meter located along C. Arellano Blvd. Pier 2, Brgy. San Roque, Cebu City on an **"as-is-where-is"** basis. The minimum bid is set at P62,112,000.00.

Interested parties may secure Bidding Guidelines and Bid Forms beginning 16 August, 2004, as follows.

For Metro Manila bidders:
National Development Company
c/o The Secretariat
Bids and Awards Committee
7th Floor, NDC Bldg.,
116 Tordesillas St. Salcedo Village, Makati City
Tel. Nos. (02)840-48-38
local 245 or 256

For Metro Cebu bidders:
c/o Atty. Romulo R. Senining
Managing Partner
Senining, Belciña & Atup Law Office
M. Lhuillier Bldg., Benedicto St.
Reclamation Area, Cebu City
Tel. Nos. 233-20-30 and 416-61-71

A pre-bid conference shall be held on 27 August, 2004 at 10:30 AM at the NDC Board Room, 8th Floor, NDC Building.

Bids must be sealed and must be submitted not later than 3:00 PM of 7 September, 2004 labeled and addressed as follows:

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee
National Development Company

The opening of sealed bids is scheduled on 7 September, 2004 at 3:00 P.M. at the NDC Board Room, 8th Floor, NDC Building in the presence of all bidder(s) and/or their authorized representative prepared in the prescribed forms and accompanied by a 10% bid bond. Bids received after 3:00 PM shall no longer be accepted.

The NDC BAC reserves the right to reject any and all bids or to waive any formality hereto and/or accept any such bids or portion of bids as may be advantageous to NDC.

BAC Chairman

(PDI Aug 15, 16 & 17, 2004)

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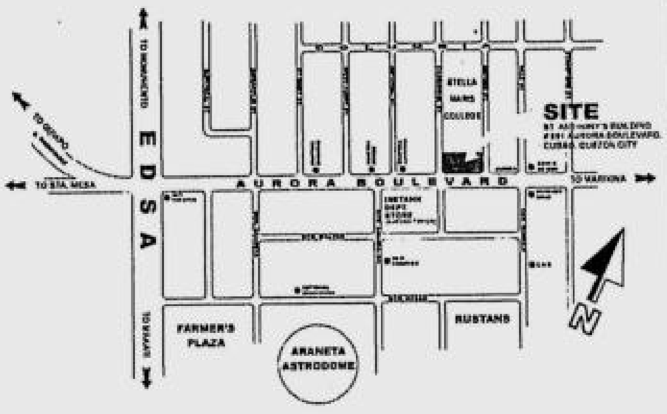

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Contact Persons: Aileen, Pat, Adel & Iris

SEGUNDO CIRON CABAÑES SR.

After a lingering illness,
has joined the Creator on August 12, 2004.

His loving wife **Victoria**; his children and in-laws **Ernie** and **Lolit**, **Noel**, **Edward** and **Cynthia**, **Edgar** and **Jesselyn**, **Vicky** and **Willy**, **Beth** and **Rodel**, **Segundo Jr.** and **Verna**, and **Manny** and **Carla**, and his grandchildren request for prayers for his eternal happiness.

The body is now on view at California Funeral Chapel, 2200, Highland Street, National City, Ca. and will be brought home on Wednesday, August 18, 2004.

His wake will continue at 41 Catleya Street, Vista Hermosa Park Subdivision, Ampid, San Mateo, Rizal.

Interment will be on Saturday, August 21, 2004 at Paraiso Memorial Park, San Mateo, Rizal.

PATRICIA L. GUECO

March 17, 1908 – August 14, 2004

Peacefully joined her Creator on August 14, 2004 at the age of 96.

Her husband **Jose Aquino Gueco** (†); children **Tining** (†) and Elsie Comilang, **Nitang** and Baby Palarca (†); **Cita** and Bestreng Borja (†), **Lulie** and Paul Balanga, **Nina**, **Josie** and Aspie Aspillera, **Boy** and Ida Balanga, **Ching** and Joey Rufino and **Cora** and Bunnie Arguelles.

Grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Christ the King Memorial Chapel C, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, August 21, 2004, 12:00 noon at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Requiem Mass at Christ the King Memorial Chapel C.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate; ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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CLASSIFIEDS

PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

CONSTRUCTION OF THE PORO POINT COMMERCIAL COMPLEX (PPCC) BOARDWALK

The Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC) invites interested contractors, with a license of at least Medium A (Park, Playground and Recreational Work) as accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB), to submit Application for Eligibility, and subsequently to bid, if eligible, for the Construction of PPCC Boardwalk, Poro Point Special Economic and Freeport Zone, Poro, San Fernando City, La Union.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of P11,150,000.00 shall come from PPMC corporate funds.

Eligibility Forms shall be made available to interested contractors on the date and place mentioned below upon payment of a non-refundable amount of two thousand five hundred pesos (P2,500.00).

Schedule of Procurement Activities:

Activity	Dates	Time	Place
Issuance of Eligibility Statement Form	August 25, 2004	8AM to 5PM	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Deadline of Submission of Letter of Intent and Eligibility Statement Form	September 1, 2004	12:00 noon	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Issuance of Instructions to Bidders and other Bid Documents	September 24, 2004	8AM to 5PM	PPMC Office, Pennsylvania Ave., San Fernando City, La Union
Pre-Bid Conference and Site Inspection	September 27, 2004	2:00 PM	Pre-Departure Area, Terminal Building, San Fernando Airport, Canaoay, San Fernando City, La Union
Submission and Opening of Bids	October 8, 2004	9:00 AM	Pre-Departure Area, Terminal Building, San Fernando Airport, Canaoay, San Fernando City, La Union

Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria, subject to a short listing by PPMC. Thus, only eligible and subsequently short listed firms shall be invited to participate in the bidding. All Bids shall be evaluated in accordance with RA 9184 and its IRR-A.

Should you need any further information or clarification regarding the Project, you may contact Engr. Virgilio M. Salayog at Telephone No. (072) 242-5638.

(Sgd.) ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Aug. 10 & 17, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Municipality of Masinloc
Province of Zambales

OFFICE OF THE BIDS
AND AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Office of the Municipal Engineer, Municipality of Masinloc, Province of Zambales invites registered contractor classified on Registration and Classification of Contractors to apply for pre-qualification and to submit bids for the following projects:

Name of Project	Location
Construction of Masinloc Multi-Purpose Municipal Hall (Phase III)	Brgy. Inhobol Masinloc, Zambales

The contract includes the furnishing of materials and labor necessary to complete the project.

Interested contractor may obtain their pre-qualification statements and bid documents from Municipal Engineer or the BAC Chairman Municipality of Masinloc, Province of Zambales upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (PhP1,000.00).

Suppliers shall submit to the BAC not later than 10:00 a.m., September 16, 2004 a) duly accomplished pre-qualification statements; b) proposal for said project using the prescribe bid form. All particulars shall be governed by the provisions of the IRR-RA 9184 concerning Government Procurement Reform Act.

Pre-Bid Conference : September 07, 2004 @ 10:00 a.m.
Bid Opening : September 16, 2004 @ 10:00 a.m.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or informality, assume no obligation whatsoever of indemnity to the bidders any expense of loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ENGR. ELLENDER C. ECLEVIA
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Aug. 17 & 24, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE
Quezon City

August 5, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Name of Project : PROCUREMENT OF 300 CARTRIDGES OF LEXMARK TONER
Location of the Project : BIR National Office
Approved Budget : P 3,750,000.00
Contract Duration : Thirty (30) calendar days upon receipt of approved Purchase Order
Source of Funding : BIR's Appropriations

All interested parties may get the bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City starting **August 11, 2004**, upon payment of a **non-refundable fee of Seven Hundred Fifty Pesos Only (P750.00).**

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **August 24, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at the 6/F, Procurement Division Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City.**

Deadline for the submission and opening of eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals shall be on **September 6, 2004 at 9:00 a.m.** at the **3/F, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City**, and followed by the opening of the bids.

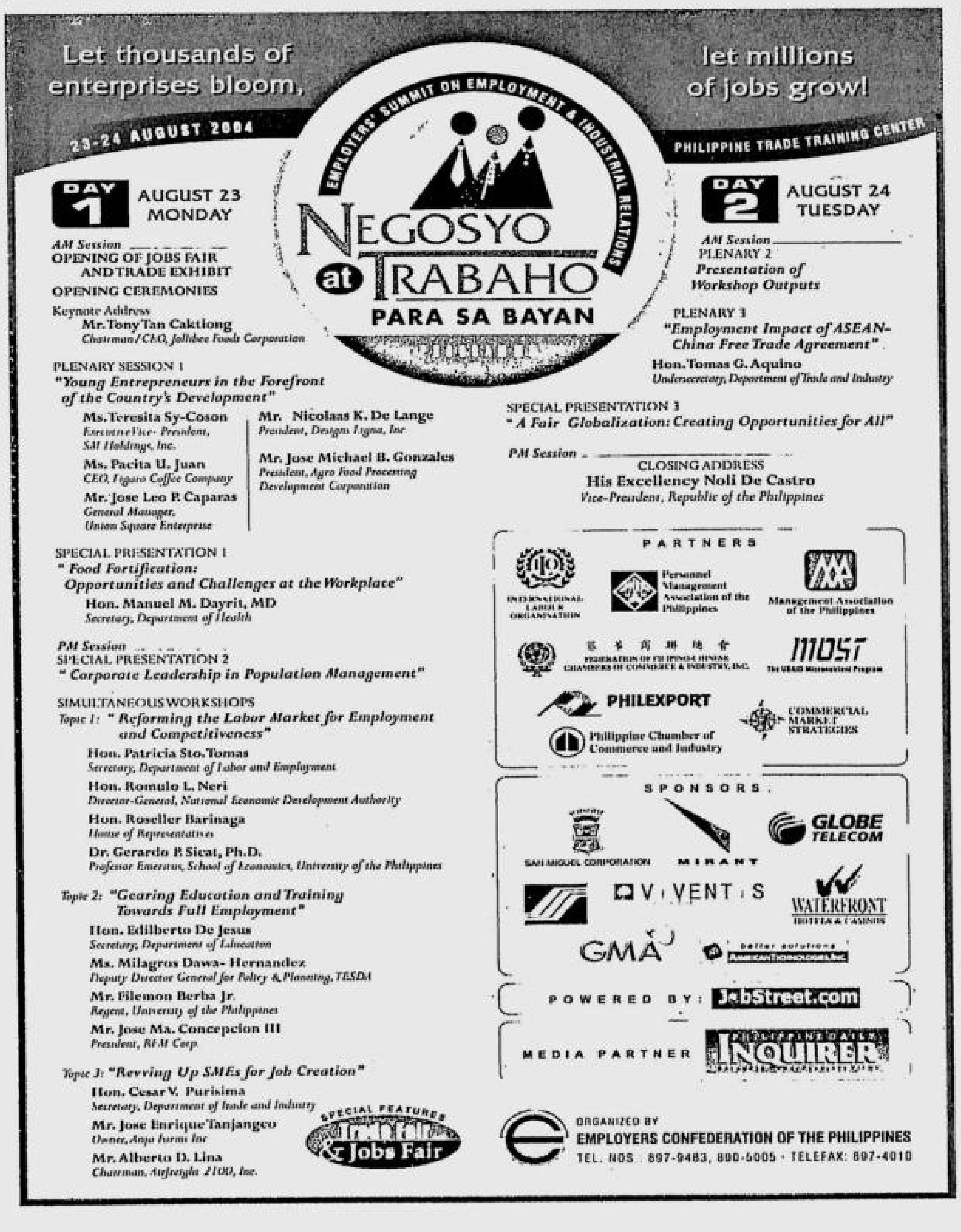
The criteria to be used by the BIR in the following: (a) eligibility check of prospective bidders; (b) examination and evaluation of bids; and (c) post-qualification, shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The BIR assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any excuse or loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the required formality therein and accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

For particulars, please inquire from the BAC Secretariat, thru the Chief, Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th Floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone nos. 926-55-47, 926-55-38 and 928-20-26 (fax), or e-mail us at nelly.ibo@bir.gov.ph until September 5, 2004.

(Sgd.) MILAGROS V. REGALADO
Assistant Commisioner-Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – August 17, 2004)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EMPLOYERS' SUMMIT ON EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
NEGOSYO at TRABAHO PARA SA BAYAN
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DAY 1 AUGUST 23 MONDAY

AM Session
OPENING OF JOBS FAIR AND TRADE EXHIBIT
OPENING CEREMONIES
Keynote Address
Mr. Tony Tan Caktiong
Chairman/CEO, Jollibee Foods Corporation

PLENARY SESSION 1
"Young Entrepreneurs in the Forefront of the Country's Development"
Ms. Teresita Sy-Coson
Executive Vice- President, SM Holdings, Inc.
Ms. Pacita U. Juan
CEO, Figaro Coffee Company
Mr. Jose Leo P. Caparas
General Manager, Union Square Enterprise
Mr. Nicolaas K. De Lange
President, Designs Ligna, Inc
Mr. Jose Michael B. Gonzales
President, Agro Food Processing Development Corporation

SPECIAL PRESENTATION 1
"Food Fortification: Opportunities and Challenges at the Workplace"
Hon. Manuel M. Dayrit, MD
Secretary, Department of Health

PM Session
SPECIAL PRESENTATION 2
"Corporate Leadership in Population Management"

SIMULTANEOUS WORKSHOPS
Topic 1: *"Reforming the Labor Market for Employment and Competitiveness"*
Hon. Patricia Sto. Tomas
Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment
Hon. Romulo L. Neri
Director-General, National Economic Development Authority
Hon. Roseller Barinaga
House of Representatives
Dr. Gerardo P. Sicat, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus, School of Economics, University of the Philippines

Topic 2: *"Gearing Education and Training Towards Full Employment"*
Hon. Edilberto De Jesus
Secretary, Department of Education
Ms. Milagros Dawa- Hernandez
Deputy Director General for Policy & Planning, TESDA
Mr. Filemon Berba Jr.
Regent, University of the Philippines
Mr. Jose Ma. Concepcion III
President, RFM Corp.

Topic 3: *"Revving Up SMEs for Job Creation"*
Hon. Cesar V. Purisima
Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry
Mr. Jose Enrique Tanjangco
Owner, Anyo Farms Inc
Mr. Alberto D. Lina
Chairman, Airfreight 2100, Inc.

DAY 2 AUGUST 24 TUESDAY

AM Session
PLENARY 2
Presentation of Workshop Outputs

PLENARY 3
"Employment Impact of ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement"
Hon. Tomas G. Aquino
Undersecretary, Department of Trade and Industry

SPECIAL PRESENTATION 3
"A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All"

PM Session
CLOSING ADDRESS
His Excellency Noli De Castro
Vice-President, Republic of the Philippines

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VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC.

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

VICTORIAS MILLING COMPANY, INC. Victorias City, Negros Occidental wishes to invite interested parties to pre-qualify and to bid for the **one (1) year supply contract of critical/fast moving spares of our bodega for Crop Year 2004-2005.**

Interested bidders must submit the following requirements:
- VMC accreditation papers for those who are not yet accredited
- Manufacturer's ISO Certificate
- Exclusive Distributorship Certificate

Pre-qualification forms are available at the MCD Office, VMC Millsite and at the VMC Makati Procurement Office during office hours from **August 17 to 24, 2004**, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P500.00. Deadline for submission of pre-qualification papers is on **August 24, 2004**. The pre-bid conference for qualified bidders is on **August 27, 2004, 3:00 P.M.** at the **HRD Conference Room, VMC Millsite, Victorias City, Negros Occidental**. The bidding date will be announced thereafter. Sealed bids shall be accompanied by a bidder's bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the bid price in the form of cashier's/manager's check payable to Victorias Milling Company, Inc.

For further inquiries, please contact **Messrs. Carlos S. Quiatchon, Dan C. Labrador, Ramon P. Pun-an or Edwin D. Togonon** at VMC Millsite at telephone numbers **(034) 399-3696 to 97**, **(034)399-3699** and (local) **2309**, and **Mr. Ping Abad** at VMC Makati Procurement Office at telephone numbers **(02)890-5256** and **(02)890-7062**, or visit our website www.victoriasmilling.com and e-mail us at mcd@victoriasmilling.com.

Victorias Milling Company, Inc., reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the Company. The Company assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder/s for any expense/s or loss that they may incur in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) TERESITA V. ILAGAN
Chairperson, Senior Bidding Committee

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BSP to probe trust activities of banks

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has begun probing undocumented sources of domestic liquidity which could impact on foreign exchange trading as well as the overall monetary policy.

According to a BSP official, the low-keyed activities of some banks to create additional liquidity have gone unreported.

The official went on to cite instances of "under-the-table" re-

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basically reflects the culture of the Filipino society.
The "garbage" and lack of substance shown in the political ads,
that's what the Filipino voters want."
Jun Nicdao, KBP

"There is a need for values formation and for education. Because only with this
will we be able to try to change the Filipinos' liking
for insubstantial political advertisements..."
Jun Perez, OAAP

"The political candidates distort and suppress the truth, so rather than
bringing people together, they are the instrument for driving them apart ...
creating mistrust, conflict and factions in people."
Atty. Jo Imbong, CBCP

"The result of the previous elections proved that political advertising,
instead of leveling-off the playing field,
gives edge to the political candidates with money...
those who can afford to air many political ads are the politicians who win"
Rina David, Philippine Daily Inquirer

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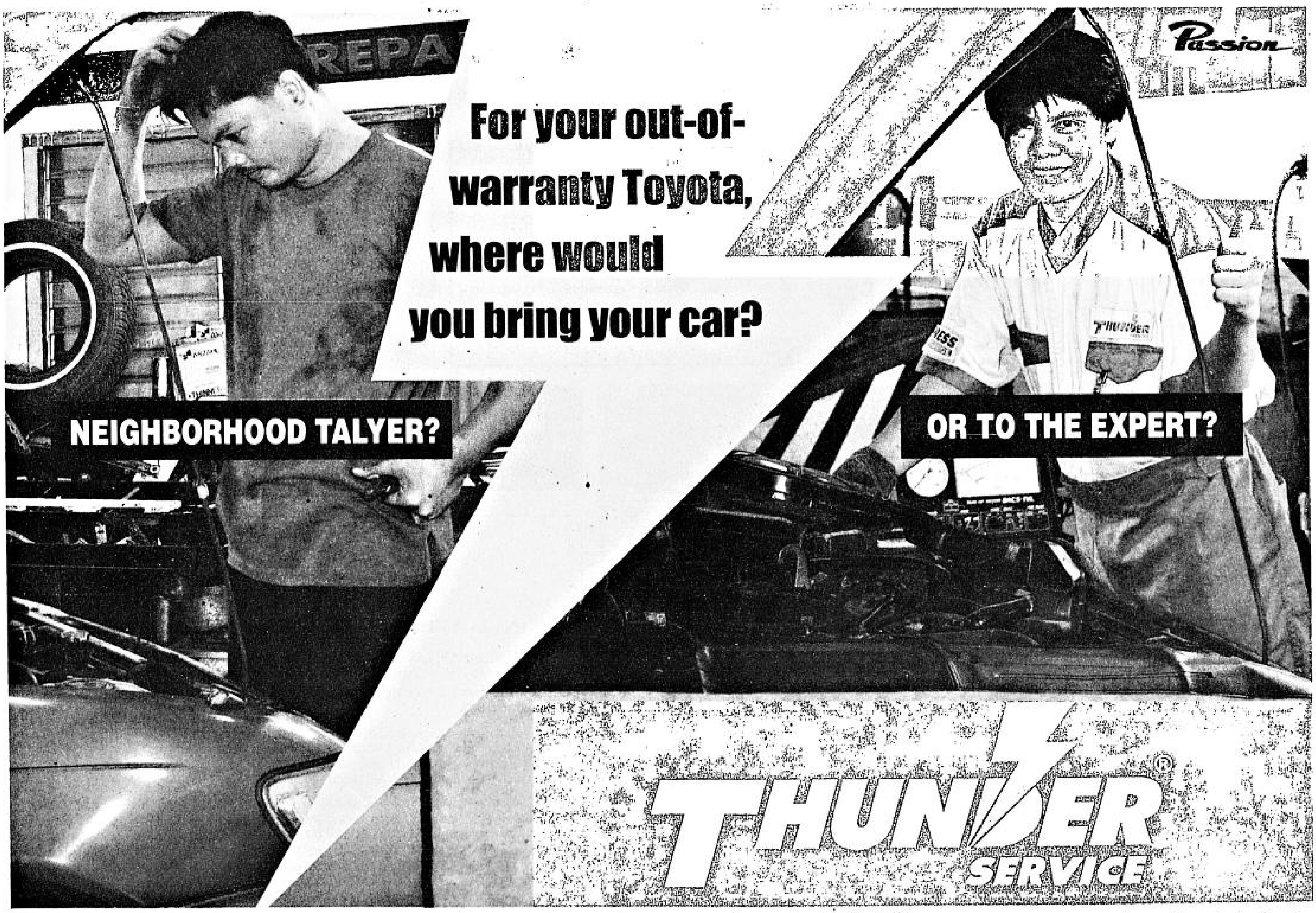

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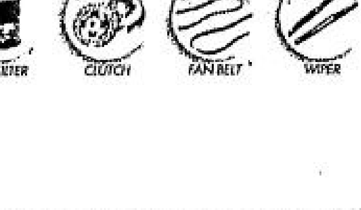

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

FROM DULL TO GREEN

Landscaped roof reduces heat, air pollution, absorbs water

By Tessa R. Salazar

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The 'green' difference

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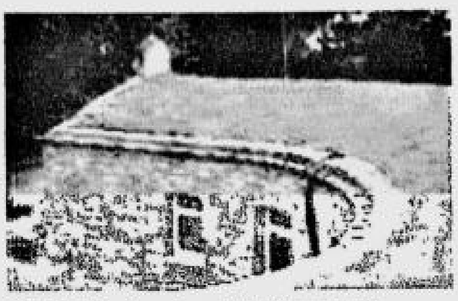
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Green roof advocates say that a garden roof-deck creates the needed relaxing green space for apartment dwellers; a mini park that can be a common community place by bringing neighbors together. They also dampen sound, which can provide urban residents a needed respite from noise pollution.

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Getting popular

"This is very popular in Europe, but now it is beginning to sprout in North America and in Germany," said Green Architecture Movement chair Amado de Jesus. GAM of the United Architects of the Philippines, is pushing for the popularity of the green roof in the country, among others.

"Germany is very earnest (in this effort). There are some areas that are required to put green roofs, and they have tax incentives to encourage (owners to set up green roofs). In fact, 14 percent of roof tops in Germany are already green." In one area in Bonn, for example, almost every home is "green roofed."

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The environmental benefits are numerous and maintenance cost-savers, De Jesus said. The first benefit is storm water management.

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Having green roofs, De Jesus explained, slows down water runoffs. The drainage systems aren't overwhelmed, thereby averting flash floods. Green roofs absorb rain like a sponge. In fact, green roofs absorb up 70 percent of the rainwater, after which water—filtered and purified—is released slowly.

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Makati Development Corporation

marks 30 years of pursuit of excellence in the construction industry

HE MAKATI Development Corporation, the Ayala Land Inc. subsidiary for construction, celebrates its 30th anniversary this year with the history of the Philippine real estate and construction industry as its veritable backdrop.

A leader in the trade, the MDC charts the industry's initiatives to provide distinctive infrastructure and structural developments to host and serve communities that are the functioning units propelling the nation's economy.

Over a span of three decades, the MDC served clients providing horizontal and vertical structures through a constant quest to innovate and outdo itself on customer satisfaction while keeping in-house stability. The latter buttressed corporate ability to grow and, at the same time, respond to challenges posed by the cyclical nature of the real estate and construction industry, and by changes buffeting the country's developing economy.

Today, the MDC undertakes projects embodying clear corporate values on customer orientation and compliance with regulatory requirements, mirroring the Ayala Land stamp for quality, integrity, pursuit of excellence, social responsibility and concern for people and empowerment.

"The corporation stands on distinctive ground, globally competitive and internally attuned to its manpower requirements for a safe, healthy and dynamic working environment," proclaims MDC President Emilio Tumbocon. "We foster a learning organization, fully realizing that the only constant factor in our industry is change."

Greenbelt, Ayala Center

Market! Market! Retail Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City

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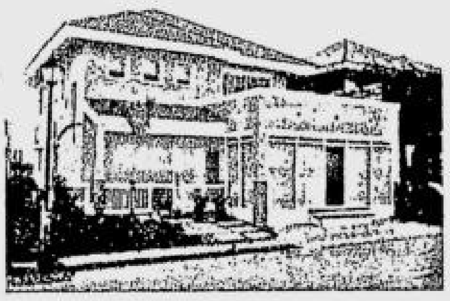
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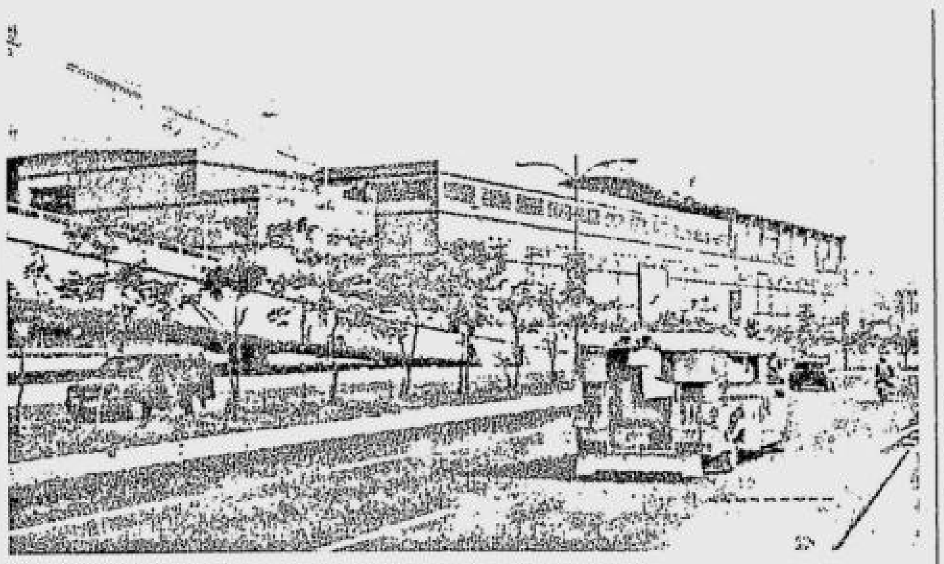

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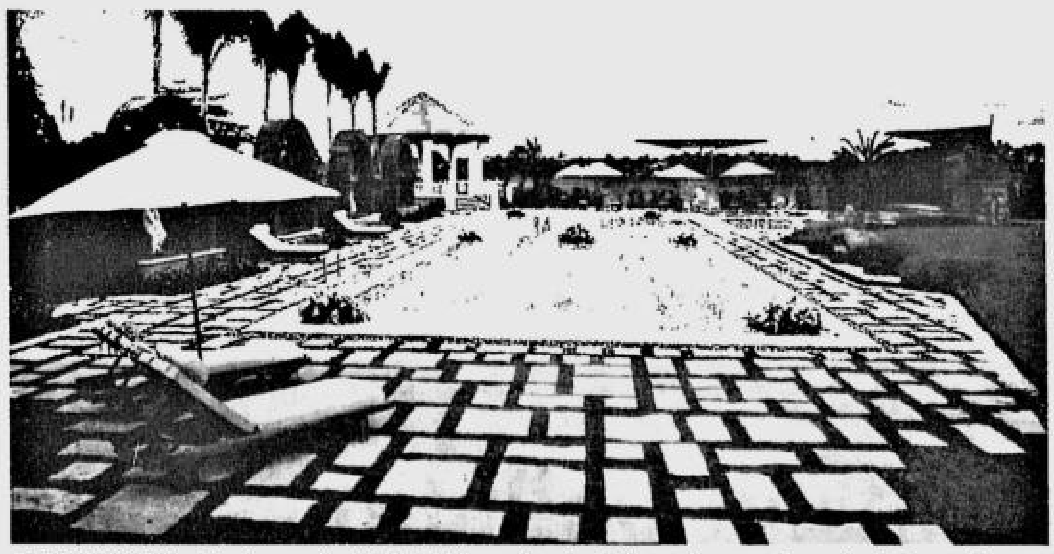
Portofino's Italian-inspired pool, a preview of 'la dolce vita'


A PERSPECTIVE of the lap pool, with the kiddie pool to the right on the opposite end and the gazebo on the left corner.

THE LOVELY harbor town of Portofino ("fine gateway" in Italian), 35 kilometers to the southeast of Genoa down the Mediterranean coast, is a top tourist destination along the Italian Riviera, with picturesque vistas both natural and man-made, lush greenery with eucalyptus and olive trees, and undulating terrain.

One description says: "Few places can rival Portofino for its harmony of colors, colors that blend, contrast and complement each other. Only here does one get the impression that for once the hand of man and the hand of nature really worked in perfect accord."

New haven

Drawing inspiration from such a place with its remarkable charms, Brittany Corp., the real estate maverick known for carefully conceptualized, high-end and themed residential communities, is building a new Portofino in which residents will experience "la dolce vita"—the good life for a few who have earned the privilege of enjoying it. Strategically located on the new Las Piñas-Muntinlupa-Laguna-Cavite Link Road, the new haven of Portofino is only a few minutes away from the Alabang business center.

GUILANA model home shows its beauty in the evening light.

Appropriately Italian-inspired, the whole enclave consists of phases 1 to 4 called Portofino Heights, of which all lots have been sold out in less than a year, with construction of the first residences already begun. An elegant, comfortable model home called the Guiliana, with 466 sqm floor area on a minimum 600 square meters of lot area, is open to visitors by appointment.

Next to Portofino Heights along the Link Road is the site of the commercial area, and beyond it is Portofino South, where land development for The Courtyards of Portofino is underway after the groundbreaking.

Pool complex

Recently, Brittany launched the swimming pool complex of Portofino Heights, an elaborately designed leisure and athletic facility inspired by those classic Roman baths. The pool complex offers a striking preview of the luxurious lifestyle that residents of Portofino Heights will savor all year round. The complex will be shielded by the grand clubhouse which will conform to the curving roadway.

The swimming section is a 25-meter lap pool which will be partially covered in the style of Roman baths. Alongside part of the lap pool is a smaller kiddie pool separated by a footbridge barrier for safety. Off near one corner is an elevated gazebo commanding a view of the pool on one side and still more leisure and sports facilities plus parks and playgrounds on the opposite side, across a creek with a small bridge.

A row of stone arches graces one side of the swimming pool. The other side has the meditation garden with a selection of plants and statuary. The arches along the pool are complemented by sculpture-like trellises that will be covered by vines.

Brittany vice president Rodel B. Racadio says that along with the clubhouse, the pool complex, planned and built in collaboration with Recio + Casas for the architecture and BGC Builders for the landscaping, is designed to be a harmonious complement to the homes.

THE GATED entry of Portofino Heights shows the promise of the comfortable elegance that awaits residents within.

Home extension

"When a homeowner walks out his front door toward the clubhouse and pool area, he will feel like it's an extension of his home, enhancing his lifestyle," he notes.

"The same painstaking attention to detail in designing the homes has been devoted to planning the pool complex in keeping with the Italian theme, down to the choice of the grass, the combination of plants and the decorative tiles for mosaics," he says.

"We based the overall design of the pool complex on the Roman bath, because it connotes socializing, health and relaxation. This now-completed pool area illustrates what we say about Portofino: All work. No play. Dull life. Not here," he adds.

Property previews of Portofino may be arranged by calling 850-2868 and 850-6986.

Housing industry won't survive gross income taxation, says Creba

THE CHAMBER of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) has assailed the government proposal to adopt a system of gross income taxation for businesses as "unconstitutional and a prescription for economic catastrophe."

In a statement, lawyer Manuel M. Serrano, Creba chair, said a system of gross income taxation, when applied to businesses, would be susceptible to a constitutional challenge on at least two grounds because it would result in multiple taxation, and being oppressive and confiscatory, it would amount to deprivation of property without due process of law.

The oppressive and confiscatory nature of gross income taxation, Creba said, stems from its taxing capital rather than realized gain. Gross income—being merely the difference between gross proceeds and the cost of sales and direct expenses—does not constitute realized gain, as it does not take into account major expenditures such as interest cost, administrative and other substantial costs, it stressed.

Worse, in all likelihood the business would end up paying income tax even when it actually incurs a net loss. This is not allowed under the Constitution and the principles of income taxation adhered to by countries worldwide.

On top of the legal issues, Creba said, gross income taxation is "a prescription for economic catastrophe, as it will destroy businesses by depriving them of the very reason for their existence—to realize gain."

Heavily taxed

The housing industry in particular cannot be expected to survive this assault. Among all businesses, Serrano said, it is already the most heavily taxed and the most saddled by exorbitant regulatory fees at every stage of the development process, from land acquisition up to sale of housing packages and effecting title transfer.

Creba cited among the burdens already imposed by the government on this industry: 1) VAT on construction materials, professional services, land development equipment, promotional materials and other inputs; 2) VAT on sale of completed projects; 3) creditable withholding tax per transaction, based on zonal values which are far higher than contract prices; 4) documentary stamp tax—which has recently been hiked by 233 percent—on developmental loans; 5) documentary stamp tax and transfer fees in the acquisition of raw lands; fees and charges—which have recently been hiked by as much as 1,000 percent—in the processing and approval of development plans and issuance of development permits; 6) conversion fees and other exorbitant charges by the DAR; and, various other fees and charges for various clearances from at least 15 other government agencies.

Apart from these, Creba said, the industry is also a helpless prey to extortionists in the government bureaucracy, whose under-the-table "fees" and charges range anywhere from P10 to P50 per square meter. The prices of housing packages being already beyond the reach of the majority of the homeless, it said, the industry simply can no longer continue to pass on these burdens to the buyers.

Moreover, because of the long gestation period and the highly capital-intensive nature of land and housing development activity, the chamber said, developers constantly suffer from tremendous cost overruns associated with unpredictable spikes in interest rates and prices of development/construction inputs.

Under these conditions, gross income taxation would leave industry players no other alternative but to close shop completely. The destruction of the housing industry alone—not counting the other business sectors to be directly prejudiced by gross income taxation—will already result in the collapse of 65 other downstream industries. The catastrophic impact on employment levels and government revenue streams should not be difficult to imagine.

Proposed measures

Creba is aware of government's need to reduce its fiscal deficit. However, this can be achieved through various other painless, more productive and constitutionally tenable means. Toward this end, Creba has proposed such measures as: legalizing, franchising and taxing jueteng; increasing the idle lands tax by as much as 50 percent; increasing taxes on sin products by as much as 90 percent; and increasing tariff on luxury and nonessential imports by as much as 100 percent.

Other proposed measures are imposing a tax on cockfights and online betting; imposing a P0.20 tax on text messaging; more effective schemes to integrate the underground economy into the government's revenue stream; adopting the IMF recommendation to withdraw the perks accorded to foreign investments; and, increasing efficiency, imposing belt-tightening measures on the entire government machinery, and a more determined implementation of anticorruption and antismuggling measures.

Ayala Hillside holds open house on Aug. 22

AYALA Hillside Estates is inviting all existing and prospective lot owners to an open house on Sunday at 9 a.m.

Ayala Land officials will give a briefing on new amenities offered in the 22-hectare village which was once part of a golf course in Diliman, Quezon City.

The amenities include two parks—one that caters to active daytime use such as basketball, swimming, exercise and recreational activities; and another focused on evening activities such as weddings, family reunions and other social gatherings as well as civic functions of the community.

Groundbreaking for the daytime amenities in Phase 1 will also be held on Sunday.

The idea of having two parks with distinct uses is very much in keeping with the planning of Ayala Hillside Estates focused on pocket neighborhoods connected by a main road.

The subdivision's unique terrain allows residents to live with green, open spaces all around them and unmarred views of the Capitol Hills Golf Course. The environment provided by the fusion of a community and a golf course is further enhanced by contemporary Asian landscaping.

Ayala Land, the country's biggest property developer, transformed 22 hectares of the Capitol Hills Golf Course in Quezon City into a top-end residential subdivision. Its first two phases sold quickly and the third phase is also moving briskly in the market. The subdivision is a short drive away from top universities.

For inquiries about Ayala Hillside Estates call 848-5000 or visit www.ayala-land.com.ph.

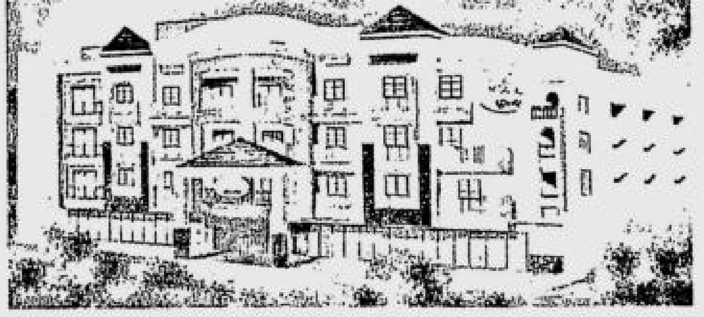
Swiss-style condo in Parañaque City

MENTION Parañaque City and what comes to your mind? Posh residential villages, ancestral homes, an international airport and a wealth of home developments.

Composed of 16 townships or barangay, the city is gearing for large-scale township developments that will include mixed land uses for residential, commercial, institutional, hotel and environment-enhancement purposes.

Unique design

One of the well-appointed residential villages in the city is Better Living Subdivision within which is located a stylish and low-density condominium called Bon Vivant A La Maison. Designed by architects OCB + Associates and structural engineers Aromin, Sy & Associates, the project is so-called because it blends the convenience of condominium living with the homey look that Swiss-inspired designs are noted for. Amenities include spacious parking spaces, an elevator, a multipurpose hall, and playground and landscaped areas.


FAÇADE of Bon Vivant A La Maison

Owned and developed by Step One Property Builders Inc. (Sopbi), A La Maison is fast gaining the favor of home buyers, both local and foreign, for its unique design, low density and affordable prices.

There are 30-square-meter studio units (priced at P1.14 million) for newlyweds, bachelors and small families. Bigger families can choose between the 60-square meter two-bedroom units and the two-level penthouse units, priced at only P2.24 million per unit.

Flexible payment terms may be arranged with Sopbi (891-5551) with offices at the 9th floor of Vicente Madrigal Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Huge discounts await early buyers.

Accessible

The proximity of Bon Vivant A La Maison to Makati City's Central Business District is another plus factor. It is located off Doña Soledad Avenue which leads to South Expressway and Skyway, making for a short 15-minute drive to and from the Makati CBD.

The upscale Alabang Business District, Ninoy Aquino International Airport, exclusive schools, churches, modern hospitals and banks are just a few minutes away.

At the helm of Sopbi are Jacqueline S. Lim, president and CEO; Editha L. Manansala, executive director for marketing, Nikko Donato, sales and marketing manager, and Jigger L. Cunanan, project director. The company engages the services of a network of competent brokers and sales people who provide comprehensive sales services to buyers.

Ayala Land awarded ISO certification

AYALA Land's Construction Management Group was recently awarded an ISO 9001:2000 certification by the Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS) for the quality of its construction management of residential, corporate, land and community development and commercial centers.

"A lot of work was put into the revision of our quality system. Part of the help extended to us was through the efforts of our consultants, Rosehall. More important, we would like to thank our proponents, the different strategic business units of Ayala Land for their continued trust and support to the group. Much of our systems and procedures were tailor-fit to meet our customer requirements as determined in close consultation with them," said CMG head, Ayala Land vice president Emilio Tumbocon, in a speech delivered at the formal awarding rites in the Makati Stock Exchange Building.

AYALA Land president Jaime Ayala, right, and Construction Management Group head Emilio Tumbocon, center, receive a plaque from Societe Generale de Surveillance managing director David Robinson certifying the firm's compliance with ISO 9001:2000 standards.

For his part, SGS managing director David Robinson lauded Ayala Land's efforts to be in step with "globally-accepted practices." "(This) better equips you to attain world-class standards of performance to provide efficient and reliable service, and achieve total satisfaction from various stakeholders," he said.

Robinson continued: "Your certification means that organizations in the Philippines and around the world will know that Ayala Land is an organization dedicated to quality—and the supplier that they can continuously trust."

Said Rosehall Consultancy Services CEO Juan Quintos: "Obtaining certification is but a launching pad for an organization in its pursuit of world-class business excellence. We urge you to go beyond just attaining certification and strive to continuously improve and innovate to achieve business excellence."

Landscaped roof . . .

From page C1

Green roofs also require buildings themselves to be structurally sound first. There are basic considerations to take note of, said De Jesus. Structurally, the building should be strong enough to carry the additional weight of a green roof.

2 types

There are two types of green roofs—light and heavy. These are the extensive types such as shallow beds (about 3- to 6-inch-thick soil) that have carpet of grass and low-lying shrubs that can live in shallow soil, and the intensive type can have up to three feet of soil. The intensive type requires a roof barrier because the roots of larger plants might damage the waterproofing.

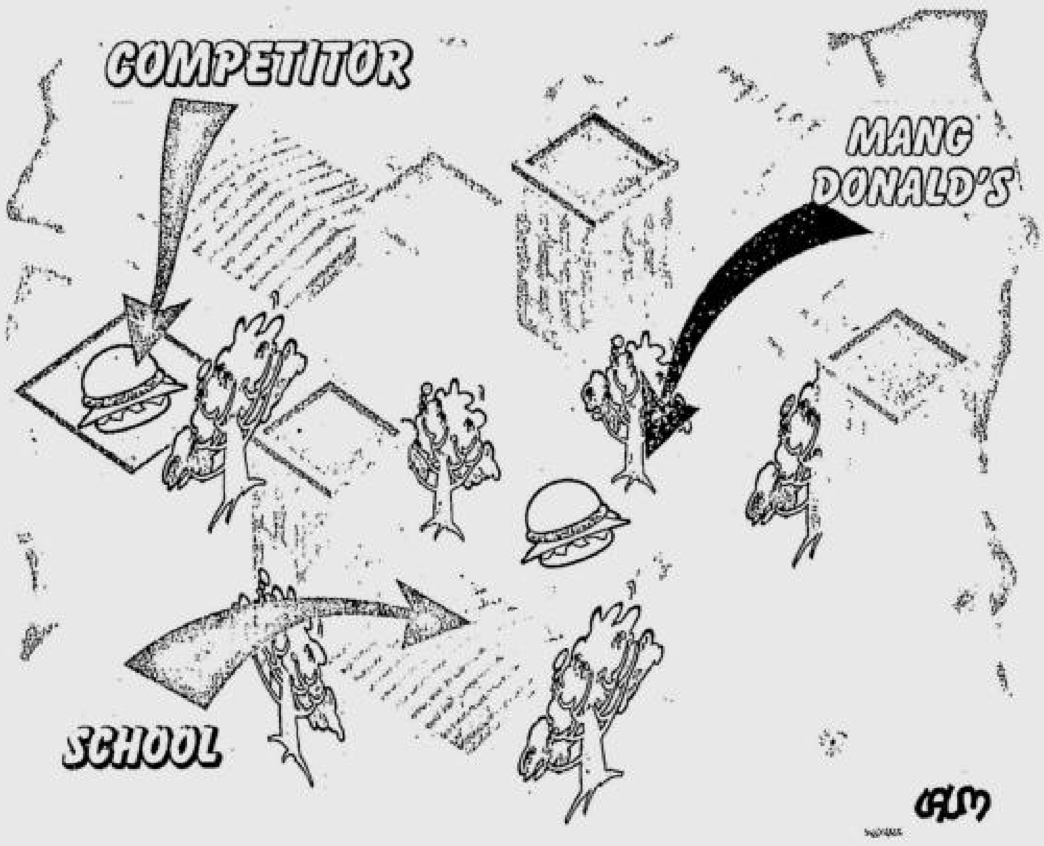
"The ideal plant types would be those that can adapt to harsh locations. Indigenous plants coming from the mountains are ideal."

If you're just in the groundbreaking stage, consider a green roof and incorporate it into your master plan. But if a building is already in place and you're interested in setting up a green roof, ask your structural engineers and architects first.

Designing and planning your commercial space

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(First of three parts)



"A FAST-FOOD chain opens a store in a high traffic area. After one year, the management decides to close the store after losing money and sinking a large amount in initial setup costs. Similarly, various competitors now surround a large gasoline station that has been operating profitably for the last five years. Revenues suddenly drop and after another year of operation, the owners finally give up the dealership.

"On a different light, a relatively unknown food store, opens a shop at a neighborhood road, becomes successful, and eventually flourishes into a chain of fast-food outlets. The business becomes very successful."

Logical framework

Were these cases due to bad or good luck? Or is there a formula to make a commercial business successful. These are stories about businesses located in commercial spaces and it may be very difficult to discover the formula for success.

There might not be a single formula for success but being able to look at the critical factors that would raise the odds in your favor would surely help you succeed. Choosing the right location is important in planning a commercial establishment but there are other factors that will affect its success. It is best that there be a logical framework in analyzing the various factors that will affect the success of a business to a great deal. There are many factors that affect the profitability and success of a business and it is surely hoped that this guide, although not perfect, will serve as a tool to help you succeed.

Planning your building

In planning your commercial building, many factors should be considered in order that its design, construction, operation and profitability are enhanced. This involves a lot of market analysis with the help of various professionals of varying disciplines.

Having a space in a commercial area is not enough. The factors that enhance its viability should be carefully studied. A successful commercial building is a combination of the right customer, right layout, right location, right product, right service and the right builder. Here, the right location is an important factor but is just a part of the entire picture.

6 forces of success

The success of a commercial location is greatly influenced by six critical forces:

- **The Right Customer**

Everything starts with identifying who the customer is and what do they value. The right real estate should match with the specific needs of the clientele that you would want to serve. This requires an in-depth analysis of their needs, wants and behavior. The location of your store or facility is the "place" in the 4 Ps of the marketing equation. This would require an industry analysis of the customers you would want to serve.

If it is a restaurant you are considering, then the number of customers that would drop by your restaurant would have to be counted and assessed. A fast-food restaurant would require a different type of customer as to a fine-dining restaurant.

Your market analysis will tell you who your customer is. This is dependent on the product you would like to sell or offer. Your marketing group will define the customer requirements and how the product or service is to be delivered.

Setting up can be easy but growing a business in a commercial location requires a lot of hard work. It is important to properly segment and target your customers and you may want to ask for the help of marketing and management professionals who really know how to assess the viability of a business in a specific location.

(Next Week : Choosing the Right Location)

E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.

FROM LEFT are engineer Manuel B. Sy, president, New Golden City Builders; Desmond Sia, VP, Philflex; Antonio G. De Ubago Jr., general manager, Esicor Inc.; Domingo H. Yap, president, H-Chem Industries; Lourdes R. Reyes, chief finance officer, Fort Bonifacio Development Corp.; architect Gilbert C. Yu, chair, G&W Architects; architect Ricardo R. Poblete, chancellor, United Architects of the Philippines; and architect Lora B. Rivera, VP Operations, Pag-Ibig, Home Development and Mutual Fund.

Build-to-own concept succeeds

G&W ARCHITECTS' pioneering build-to-own (BTO) system recently celebrated two milestones—the completion and house blessing of Penhurst Parkplace, a first-class residential condominium development in Fort Bonifacio, and the groundbreaking of Kensington Place, a similar condo development project in the same locale, which is expected for completion in 2006.

The BTO system represents a breakthrough in real estate development because it allows potential unit owners the privilege of owning prime first-class condominium units at direct cost—and the fastest delivery time.

Eliminating the middleman

Through the BTO, homeowners directly engage the services of a team of construction industry professionals, as opposed to the traditional method of buying from a middleman developer whose mark-up prices average 40 percent.

By eliminating the middleman, homeowners are assured of realized savings of 40 percent and are provided unprecedented protection through a trustee bank that assures all payments of the unit owners go solely to the construction of the project alone. In contrast, the old system does not provide trustee bank protection at all.

Savings, protection

In effect, the BTO system puts emphasis on savings and protection for the unit owners. Homeowners earn interest as soon as their payments go to the depository and disbursement bank, thereby earning high-yielding interest for them before construction starts.

In the same manner, the two-year delivery time frame allows homeowners the chance to immediately rent out or use their homes, thereby enabling them to save three years worth of rent paid to live elsewhere.

Protection is guaranteed since each unit owner employs a depository and disbursement bank with strict instructions that all funds will go directly to the project alone. This assures direct ownership from the beginning since the whole project is debt-free and nothing is mortgaged. All assets acquired and on-site remain as the unit owner's property throughout the construction period.

Living up to its claims of faster delivery, G&W Architects was able to deliver its Penhurst Parkplace project to its owners in only 22 months—two months earlier than its original schedule.

World-class granite featured at Philconstruct

LION Granite Construction Supply Corp. will showcase its entire product line of imported granite and marble at the Philconstruct 2004 exhibit organized by the Philippine Constructors Association to be held from Nov. 18 to 21 at the prestigious World Trade Center Metro Manila.

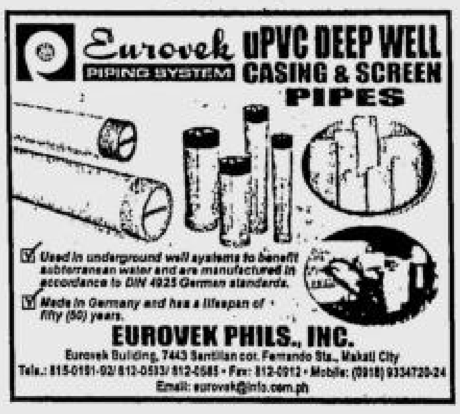
Lion Granite is the market leader of Homogeneous Tiles from Portugal, Taiwan & China and Repla Granite 90 from Italy.

The contract for was signed by Edwin Santos, designer of Lion Granite; Alexis Amburgo, marketing manager; and Cathy Chua, manager of Lion Granite.

The contract signing was witnessed by Levy Espiritu and Jerico Borja, PCA directors and co-chairpersons of the Technoforum which will be held together with the show.

Philconstruct 2004 is the 14th Philippine International Construction Equipment and Building Materials Exhibition. It will feature "Modern Home Expo", a showcase of the latest interiors, furnishings, lighting, entertainment and lifestyle products, services and technology.

For more participation details at Philconstruct 2004, please contact the event manager, Global-Link Business Communications Phils. at 887-1304 or 750-8588.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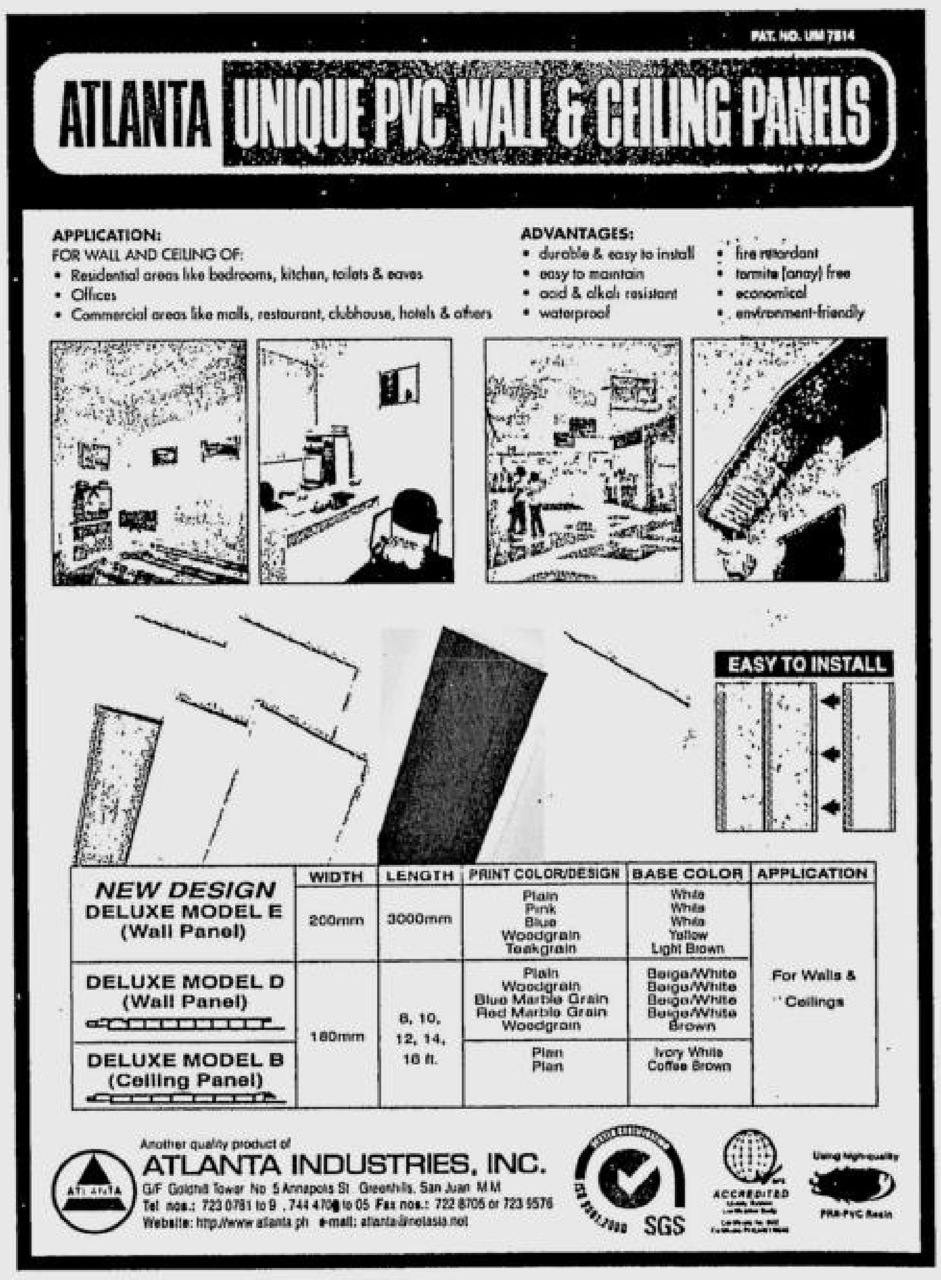
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DELUXE MODEL D (Wall Panel)	180mm	8, 10, 12, 14, 16 ft.	Plain Woodgrain Blue Marble Grain Red Marble Grain Woodgrain	Beige/White Beige/White Beige/White Beige/White Brown	
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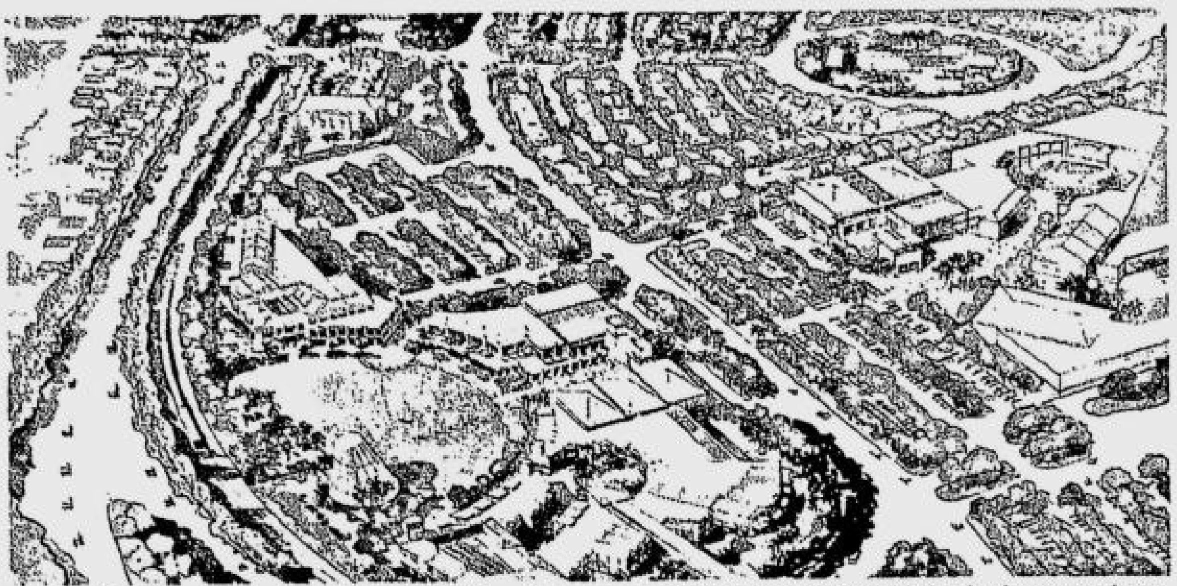
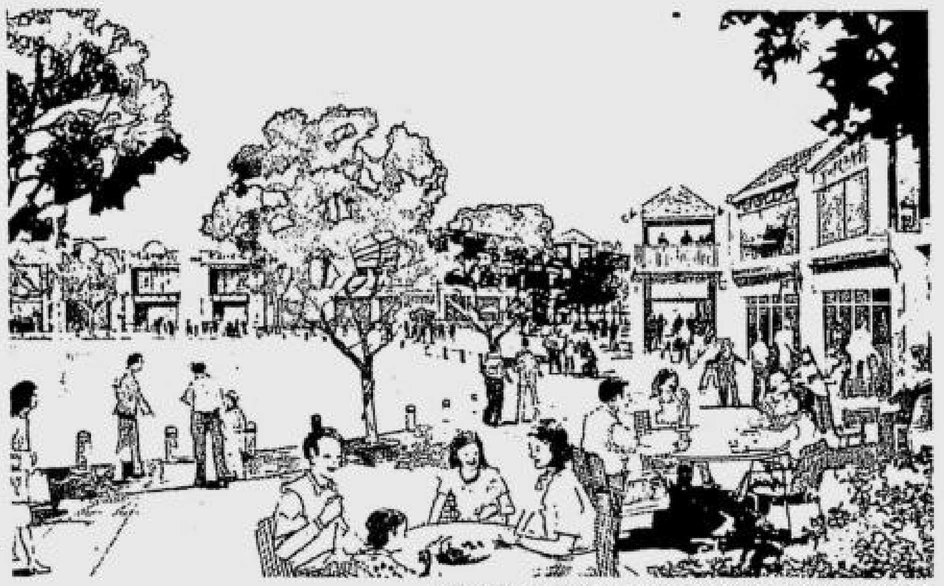


JUBILATION New Biñan, where Jubilation East is an integral part, will feature an identifiable focal point as seen here from an artist's sketch



NEIGHBORLY interaction will be fostered through several centrally located places of interests

New urbanism taking root in Laguna

By Charles E. Buban

A NEW community being developed in the province of Laguna may be the country's first to join a US trend toward developing pedestrian-friendly, human-scale neighborhood reminiscent of pre-World War II communities.

Earth+Style Corp. CEO Jacinto Ng Jr., whose company is in charge of developing the 150-hectare Jubilation New Biñan (where Jubilation East is an integral part), says he would like to develop a community with characteristics of new urbanism, a type of design that has become increasingly popular in the past few years, especially in the United States, where over 600 planned communities are built around this idea.

New concept

"New urbanism is a direct response to the suburban sprawl of the postwar era and with this concept, Earth+Style is going to master plan a smaller, denser neighborhood that has a discernible center. This mixed-use area is a town center, park plaza and sports club plus, which is separate from the country club located in each residential neighborhood surrounding it," Ng reveals.

This new concept also calls for a network of interconnected streets and paths that encourage walking and reduce the necessity of private vehicles, according to Ng.

'Monumental' ideas

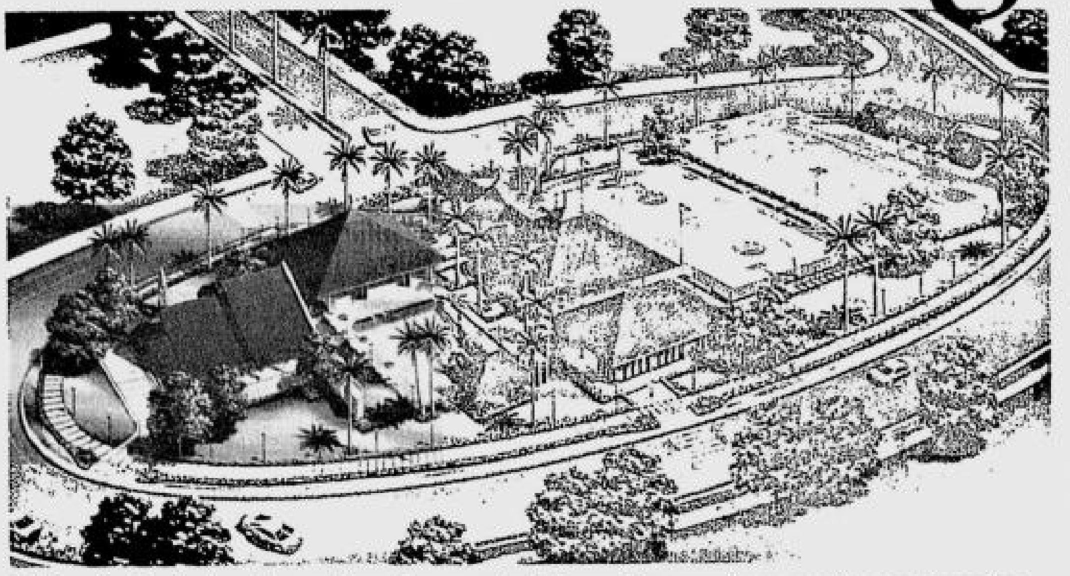
"Filipinos have become so accustomed to 'monumental' ideas every time a new residential project comes up. This time, we decided to bring development back to the scale of a person—where roads are naturally smaller, where people can safely walk, where open spaces are just a walking distance from your home, where there is a better relationship between the individual and the environment," he explains.

Loosely defined, the new urbanism concept started with the simple idea of persuading builders to create developments on a smaller scale; to increase the density of residential areas, to build schools, stores, offices and recreation within walking distance; focus on plans for pedestrians and public transportation; to create friendly streets that encourage neighborly interaction through porches, stoops, and balconies; and to mix housing for various levels of income.

Key elements

An authentic new urban neighborhood contains most of these key elements:

- **Walkability**—Grocery stores, schools, workplaces and recreational facilities would be an easy 5- to 10-minute walk for most residents.
- **Centrally located mixed-use area**—Certain prominent sites at the termination of street vistas or in the neighborhood center are reserved for special purpose buildings. These provide sites for community recreations, meetings, education and religious or cultural activities
- **Slowing traffic**—The streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees. This slows traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles.
- **Diverse housing**—There are a variety of dwelling types so that younger and older people, singles and families, the poor and the wealthy may find places to live.
- **Increased density**—Residences, stores and workplaces are close together to promote walking and discourage driving, and to encourage social interaction.



ZEN garden inspired gardens and luxurious country club amenities promise unparalleled ambiance for residents of Jubilation East

Asian theme

To be completed by end of 2005, the residential village Jubilation East features Asian-theme houses, another throwback to the Filipino heritage, according to Ng.

"The Asian theme goes well with the new urbanism concept. It makes sense," Ng quips.

Unlike other developments, Jubilation East gives its buyers a lot of options where they can choose from a variety of styles.

"It's much like shopping for clothes or for a car. You choose the style, color and size you want, and wherever you want it. We do not impose restrictions as to which location you can build the style you want. So long as the house fits the property and that it is according to the overall theme, we allow that. This is the kind of freedom of choice that we give," Ng explains.

Edaw Earthasia philosophy

Earth+Style's vision for the 13.87 hectare Jubilation East matches the philosophy of its master planner Edaw Earthasia, the international pioneer of New Urbanism and the creator of Disney's Celebration Place in Florida.

Assures Ng: "We saw in Celebration Place how the development was planned and executed and how it was able to achieve the ideals of new urbanism. We are bent on achieving this for Jubilation East."

Thus, in the master plan for Jubilation East are centralized points of interest that are no more than a five-minute walk from the surrounding residences.

Among these are the now operational Pavilion Mall (that is a joint venture with and is being managed by Ayala Land Inc.); Family Leisures (a collection of country club amenities); and park plazas and sports clubs.

"Soon to rise is the Pure Gold Hypermart facility. There will also be underground utilities to ensure efficient delivery of basic services and also an uninterrupted verdant streetscapes, something inexplicably lacking in most of today's communities," Ng enumerates.

Lifestyle property developer

Earth+Style would like to position itself as a lifestyle property developer.

Says Ng: "The entire focus of our lives has changed. Instead of doing everything some place other than close to home, we now can eat, do errands, celebrate special occasions and just hang out near our own home. This is the lifestyle we would like to create for out future residents."

If the Jubilation East and the the Jubilation New Biñan, as a whole, can accomplish its goals, Ng expects the new urbanism is poised to become the dominant real estate and planning trend of the 21st century.

One Legazpi Park awarded for 3 million safe man hours

ONE Legazpi Park, an Ayala Land condominium, recently celebrated a special achievement in a ceremony that recognized those involved in the safe construction of the infrastructure.

Ayala Land Inc. management officials awarded the Project team for its observance of maximum caution that totals up to 3 million safe man hours. The event was attended by ALI and EEI Corp. officers and employees as well as principals of consultant firms.

FROM LEFT are Emilio J. Tumbocon, ALI vice president Angela de Villa-Lacson, ALI senior vice president Samson C. Lazo, EEI president and COO Jose Martin O. Aliling, JAA managing partner and Mike Milaor, ALI project director.

Safety concerns

Tito Aliling, managing partner of Construction Managers, Jose Aliling & Associates, lauds One Legazpi Park's attention to safety, which can be considered a rare feat in the industry.

Says Aliling: "At the start, EEI submits a comprehensive program which covers safety, sanitation and security. We and the other consultants review this, and once it's approved, that becomes the bible that defines all the rules. What EEI achieved is a serious matter; it educates all the laborers to follow the rules."

EEI culture

Aliling adds that workers are briefed for 15 minutes daily, "conditioned" and reminded of the proper use of materials, fire prevention and evacuation, and other related concerns.

"It's the culture of EEI on this particular case, because safety is a priority. What's important here is, beyond this project, we are setting a goal for the industry, so that other contractors will follow. This is self-imposed by the construction management of the company, which makes it even better," he shares.

Sammy Lazo, president and chief operating officer of EEI, says that the construction milestone is important for future residents of One Legazpi Park.

Safety achievement

Says Lazo: "You cannot have a clean project without safety. These condo units, if they weren't clean during the construction stage, the resulting finished product also wouldn't be a quality product. I'd like to emphasize that the safety achievement that we have is the achievement of not just EEI, but also the client, the construction managers and the contractors."

The overall effect of major accidents would have been big, if these ever occurred during the condominium's construction phase, according to EEI's project manager Albert Saringo.

"Your project could be stopped if you don't satisfy the set standards. These can lead to many lost opportunities. Once you stop, you won't finish as scheduled. That will multiply the costs. Possible financial losses are saved because One Legazpi Park didn't have any accidents," expounds Saringo.

Strict rules

Chris Brutas, EEI's construction manager, stresses that strict rules were implemented to avoid such accidents.

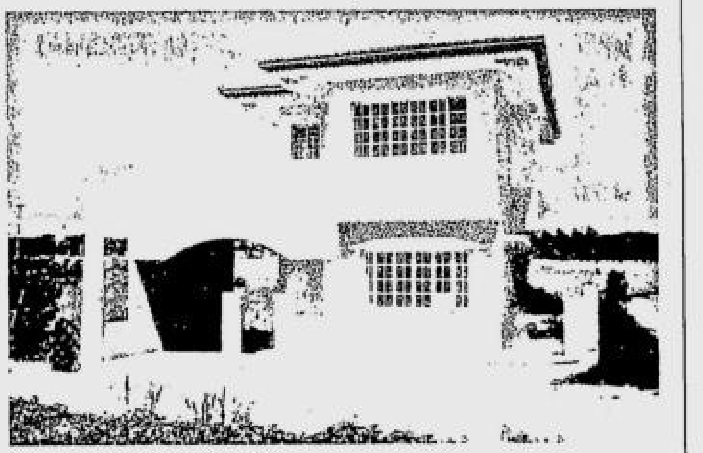
Says Brutas: "We observe the laborers as they work, constantly checking if they comply with these rules. There's full supervision by the safety officer, who reminds them of their responsibilities. If there are violations or near-misses, we discuss them during the morning assembly."

Project director Mike Milaor of Ayala Land's Construction Management Group is grateful for the collective efforts of those concerned in the endeavor. One Legazpi Park has been awarded the "Safest and Best Project" by the Makati City government just last year, and Milaor is appreciative of this significant new attainment. "I congratulate EEI Corp., and also Makati Development Corp. for its work in OLP's substructure, for achieving this important milestone. This '3 million safe man hours' is based on their accomplishments."

Birmingham Meadows rises in Rodriguez, Rizal

THE ORIGINAL Birmingham Place thrived in Cainta, Antipolo City and San Mateo, Rizal.

Now, a new Birmingham subdivision, this time called Birmingham Meadows, is fast rising in Rodriguez (formerly Montalban), Rizal.



GLOUCESTER model

Subdivision concept mix

The Birmingham Meadows, located on A. Mabini Highway, Burgos, Rodriguez, follows the same subdivision concept mix pursued by owner-developer Homeowners Development Corp. in earlier projects.

Two-story house-lot units, townhouses and home lots for middle-income families wanting to move to a serene environment, but complete with amenities and facilities, at affordable prices, or build their own houses later.

Track record

The Meadows owner-developer has a tract record of building communities with comfortable, affordable, well-designed and structurally-sound houses, using steel-reinforced concrete and complete with subdivision amenities.

The Meadows site is covered by 24-hour transportation facilities, even for car-less families, to and from Manila, Quezon City, Makati and adjoining cities and towns. It is a 45-minute drive from Edsa-Ortigas Avenue, Cubao and Edsa Crossing on Shaw Boulevard where the big shopping malls are.

5 models

The Birmingham Meadows, says HDC president Jaime I. Hernandez, offers five models. The Gloucester model has 110-sq-m floor area on a 120-sq-m lot, living and dining rooms, two sets of toilet-bathroom, three bedrooms, maid's room, balcony and carport lanai. The Northampton model with a 74-sq.m. floor area and 120-sq-m lot area, two bedrooms and two toilet-bathroom sets, and carport, while the Southampton model has two rooms and two toilet-bathroom sets. Each Coventry and Dover townhouse unit has 50-sq-m floor area on 55- to 63-sq-m-lot areas, two bedrooms, and two toilets-bathrooms. All house models are fitted with room and kitchen cabinets, imported tiles for the first and second floors, bathroom finishes, prepainted long-span roofing, painted steel casement windows, using steel bars, reinforced columns and beams and flooring for structural durability and finish.

A Birmingham Meadows homeowner will feel secure and at peace with the gated community, perimeter fence and 24-hour security. Family members will breathe fresh, clean air, wake up to chirping birds in the morning and, from the balcony, see stars in the sky on clear nights.

Accessible

The new subdivision is also accessible from Quezon City via the new Batasan bridge connecting Batasan complex in Quezon City to. San Mateo and Rodriguez, and the highway along Marikina City and San Mateo. Rodriguez is cooler than Metro Manila all-year round, even in summer. The Meadows, with its urban yet rustic ambiance, enjoys a cool, fresh and clean air.

Birmingham Meadows residents will also be near such schools as University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila, Assumption, St. Scholastica in Marikina, and a host of Montessori schools.

They will be some 45 minutes drive to the Philippine Heart Center, Lung Center and other private and public hospitals in Metro Manila and Rizal. With all these modern conveniences plus PLDT, Digitel and PT&T facilities, being a Meadows residents is like or better than living in Metro Manila. The developer's office may be reached at 911-2696 or www.hdc-realestate.com.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

WELLNESS myths and updates /D4

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inquirer life name/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Exercise: love it or hate it

WHY do some people love exercise while others hate it? Exercise psychologists haven't yet discovered the definitive answer to this question.

But psychologists like Dr. Christine Brooks of the Center for Research on Active Lifestyle Behavior at the University of Michigan are hot on the investigative trail.

Through in-depth interviews with hundreds of adults of all ages and occupations, Brooks discovered six interrelated factors that influence people's decision to exercise or not. These factors might help you understand why you are or aren't motivated to exercise.

Socio-cultural environment

Your success at exercise or sports depends partly on whether your family was physically active or not. A mahjong queen mother and a television addict father do not usually produce triathlete children.

If you hang around overweight sedentary friends, there is little pressure to be anything else. The saying, "Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are," applies to fitness as much as other areas in life.

Your cultural environment also influences how you live your life. Some cultures give importance to being fit and slim while others don't.

Psychological state

Your psychological state accounts for how you think and feel about physical activity. It is influenced by three elements—attitude, needs and sense of competence.

Your attitude toward exercise stems partly from past experience. It will affect not only the kind of activity you choose (if you decide to do something) but also where you will do that activity.

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

If, as a kid, you felt ungraceful in ballet, you probably will not enroll in an aerobics class but you may do aerobics by following a video in the "safety" of your own bedroom where no one will see you.

Your needs can range from self-esteem to biological. You might exercise for reasons like wanting to look good to rekindle romance in a troubled marriage or because you can't finish 18 holes of golf without huffing and puffing.

No one likes to look stupid or clumsy so most people choose a physical activity equal to their sense of competence. It's no wonder walking is a popular form of exercise. It requires little skill, therefore no risk of feeling incompetent. The sense of being lacking in competence is what stops many people from joining a gym. They are scared to be caught not knowing what to do.

Sense of commitment

Commitment is affected by attitude and need. The stronger the need, the stronger the commitment. People who do not have a strong commitment to exercise do not have a strong psychological need to work out, therefore, being fit is not that important to them. Until the need becomes strong enough, a person will usually not stick to exercising.

I have known people who suddenly became committed exercisers when they were "scared to death" by high cholesterol levels. The desire to avoid a heart attack or stroke made them commit to an active lifestyle.

Expectations

Brooks identified three kinds of expectations—opportunity, anguish and rewards.

Even if a person has a desire to exercise but does not have the convenience of time or place, s/he will probably not succeed.

Brooks found that people were easily discouraged. If they expect a gym to be intimidating, they will not go there. If they expect to be sore all over, they will delay starting exercise. If they expect a sport to be too difficult, they won't even try.

On the other hand, if people expect the rewards (weight loss, firm muscles, social approval) to outweigh the anguish, they start exercising. This is probably why consumers fall so easily for those television infomercials that promise, for instance, "a flat stomach" (the reward) in "just minutes a day" (less anguish).

Rewards

The rewards from exercising may or may not match your expectations. For example, you expect to lose weight but after a month, you still haven't lost a pound. But you continue to exercise because you get the benefit of feeling good and sleeping better at night. If the expected rewards are unrealistic, like getting fit in a month when you have been sedentary for 10 years, you will probably stop exercising because there is too large a gap between what you actually get and your expectation.

Satisfaction

When what is expected matches what you actually receive and the anguish factor is not too high, you will have a positive psychological state and will, most likely, continue exercising. But a mismatch of expectations and rewards will probably discourage you from continuing your fitness routine.

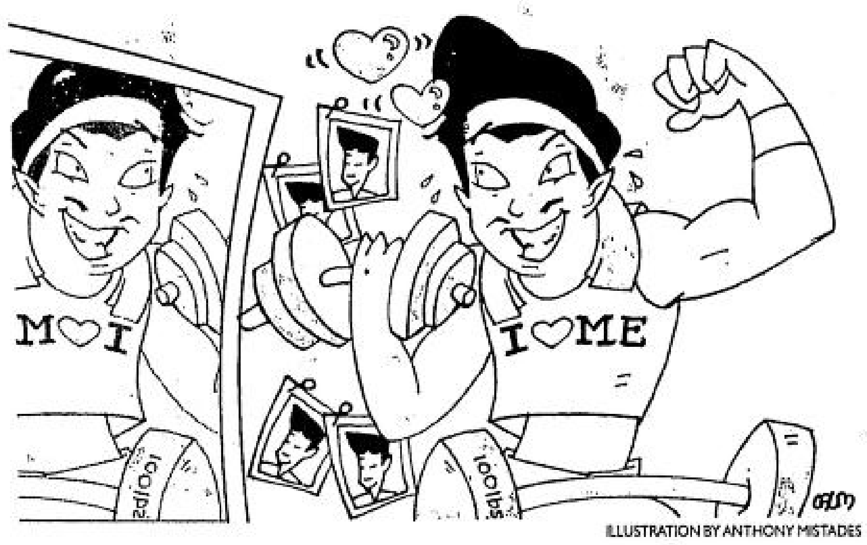
The 'Enough is enough!' threshold

Psychologists say you have to reach the point when you say to yourself, "Enough is enough!" before you will take action to exercise. How do you get to this threshold? It may be the "painful" sight of your naked body, a partner's comment about your growing waistline, a close friend's death from heart attack or a doctor's advice to exercise. Health and fitness information can also trigger the same response.

Whatever the reason, if you haven't crossed that threshold yet, exercise is probably not on your list of priorities in life.

Next week: The six steps from couch potato to fitness fanatic

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info



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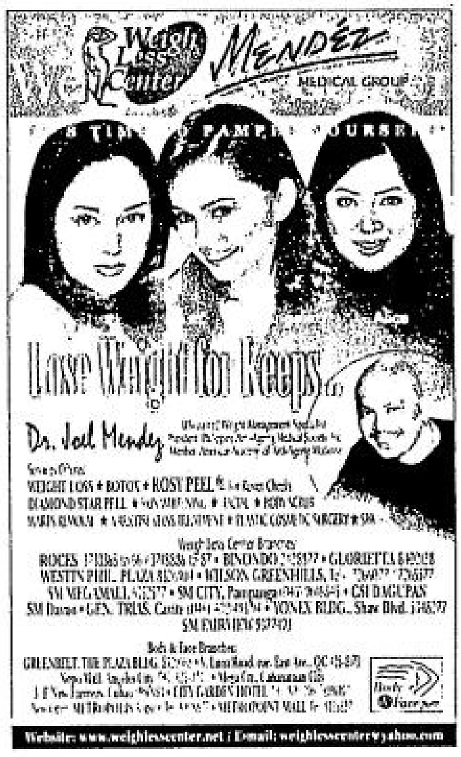
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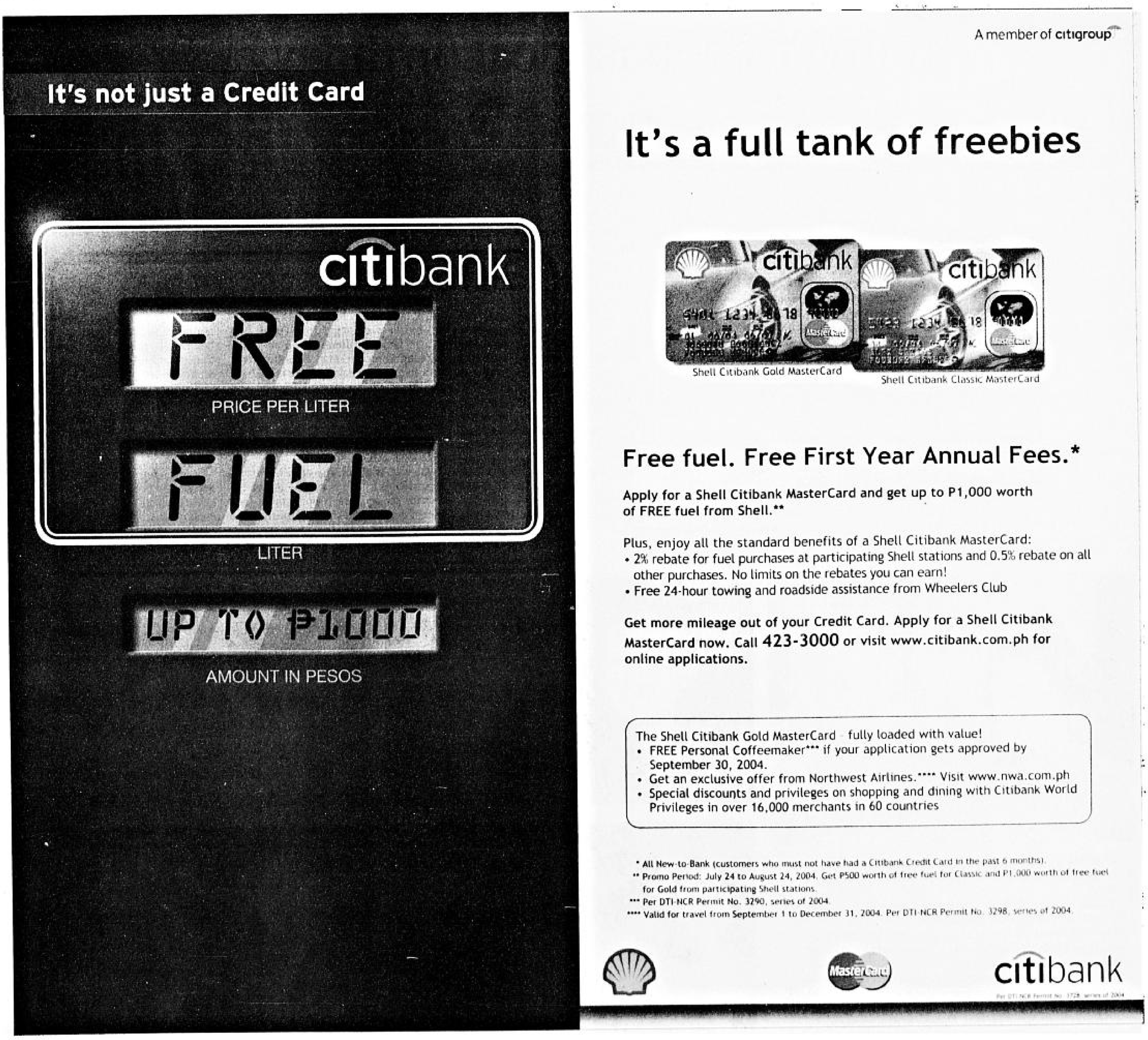

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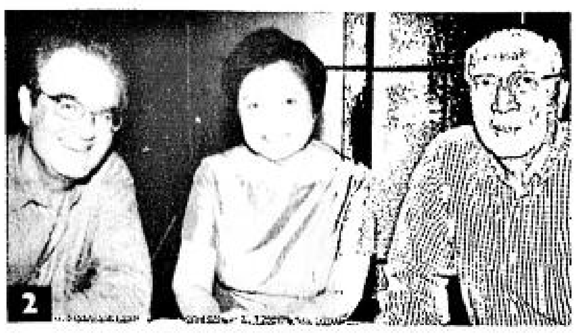

1. FAMILLE ROYAL. The celebrator, young business magnate Joey Concepcion, with wife Marissa Orosa C. and their children, Christian and Migsy and Catherine and Monica (front)
2. HOWARD Belton, Unilever chair; Marivic Araneta Concepcion, the celebrator's mother; and taipan James Uy
3. NANDO Pimentel with Boyer and Susan Syquia
4. ARCHITECT Dominic Galicia and Tina Periquet
5. BUSINESSMEN Raffy Hechanova and Gus Infante
6. SUZY and Ed Calma
7. JACK and Edith Rodriguez with Karin Igual and Marianne Pimentel
8. RENE Pantangco, Jun Nacino, Bong Masaet and Mario Mendoza
9. MICKEY Cojuangco and his wife Lizette Banzon, with Roseloo Koffman and dimpled Ditas Lopez
10. THE BLACK BRIGADE. Eye-catchers Marilen Concepcion and Martha Uy; (seated) Rina Araneta, Michelle Reyes, Liza Uy and Renna Angeles
11. DON Jose Concepcion
12. TRADE Secretary Cesar Purisima
13. ALOYSIUS Colayco, chair of Jardine Davies
14. SERGIO Ortiz-Luis, chair of Export Bank
15. EDWIN and Tina Lim
16. JOEY Ramos and Butch Prieto

Young tycoon is ideal birthday boy

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

THEY are all known to light up Manille's night life and the business world, *palanggas*. And let me tell you, no other description can quite beat that.

The one and only RFM president and CEO, young brilliant tycoon **Joey Concepcion**, was joined by his *famille*, close pals and some heavyweight business associates in a fun celebration of his birthday at the *tres* posh One McKinley Place no less in Fort Bonifacio, a luxury property development of Philtown. Joey is also Philtown's mega chair and CEO.

The high-ceilinged lobby was eye-catchingly adorned with glass panels accented with candles, providing a sophisticated ambience to this once-a-year bash. The already super atmosphere was further enhanced by elegant floral arrangements, and made more comfortable with couches scattered around where invitees could take a breather during the party.

Hostess during the occasion was Joey C's stunningly attractive wife, **Marissa Orosa Concepcion**, with all their beautiful kids **Christina, Migsy, Catherine** and **Monica**. Some of the chit-chat was expectedly loaded and fun yet oh-so-polite, as to be expected from all well-mannered men and ladies, *n'est-ce pas*? Among other adorables in the celebration were Joey's parents, business magnate **Joe Concepcion** and his wife **Marivic Araneta**; cousins **Ton** and **Karen Concepcion**; and **Jojo** and **Joy Concepcion**. New guards included **Marie** and **Arthur Young**, always fun **Bernie Concepcion** and my *palangga*, **Marilen Santos C.**; and **John** and **Peachy Concepcion**.

Who else was there? Well, among the 60 or so invitees were **Vina** and **Raul Monasterio**; **Lisa** and **Dondi Santos**; attractive **Ines** and **Dito Borromeo**, with their daughter; **Michelle** and **Eric Reyes**; **Celine** and **Larry Lebron**; architect **Dominic Galicia**; popular interior designer **Tina Periquet**; **Crickette Abelo**; **Nori** and **Martha Uy**; southern belle **Gina Lacson Gabaldon Hechanova**; **Butch** and **Mecca Prieto**; **Kit** and **Judy Vergara**, plus others so polite like them, dahlings.

Also some of the most respected "creme de la creme" of Makati's hot business set who are so charming like Trade Secretary **Cesar Purisima**; Unilever chair **Howard Belton**; Jardine Davies chair, tycoon **Aloysius Colayco**; SGV senior partner **Mildred Ramos**; Philtown hotshot president **Rally Martinez**; and Export Bank mega chair, **Sergio Ortiz-Luis**; and RFM executives led by EVP, **Jun Nacino Jr.**; **Joe** and **Marily Orosa**, and **Grace** and **Ramon Pimentel**.

There was a mountain of superb cheese that perfectly complemented the yummy salmon and vegetable and meat canapes. An excellently chosen wine flowed to complement the spread elegantly crafted by chef *du jour*, **Margarita Fores**, but who else! Laid-back cool sounds completed the chic shindig. More upbeat tunes played later in the night got many of the guests rocking, *palanggas*.

Glorious food, great company—everyone went home happy. But not before Joey had thanked one and all graciously. Needless to say, he is the ideal birthday boy and long may he live.

Cheers, *palangga*!

Financial help from pros

Citibank has come up with something new yet again, and it's causing quite a stir among those who seriously wish to build fortunes for the long haul and attain their goals for the future.

In fact, this new service is in the same league as the one the bank has been giving more affluent clients for some time now but with a slight difference, *palanggas*—this one, "is geared toward growing one's wealth and helps you plan financially for your goals."

The new service is called Citibanking, and it's all about professional financial management by global professionals, no less.

Held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, the launch brought Citibank's topmost executive contingent, led by impeccable fashion plate, brilliant **Nina Aguas**, the country business manager for Global Consumer Group; **Ailene Litonjua**, retail banking director; and **Annette Tirol**, wealth management head for retail bank and branch head for Makati, who also hosted the program; and Greenhills Citibank's **Ofie Nunez**. From the regional office came **Les Matheson**, division executive for Citibank Asia Pacific, who jetted in for this event.

Anyway, while on the subject of banking, *palanggas*, a tycoon was telling me that his society wife (whom you've seen tons of times on the lifestyle pages) and he had a joint account. "I deposit and she's forever withdrawing from it." He continued, "In fact, she had an accident at the bank recently." "What happened?" I asked. "Would you believe, she stood in the wrong line and made a deposit." Bet that made him happy for a change, *'di bala*!

Anyway, the ever-fashionable and *charmante* Nina Aguas said, "Citibank has long carved a reputation [as] the bank of choice among affluent customers." With Citibanking, they are now reaching out to a segment composed of hardworking professionals, career-oriented individuals, entrepreneurs and, *naturallement*, their *famille*.

According to regional executive Les Matheson, "We are introducing Citibanking to meet the needs of a segment that is not being as well-served as they should be. This is about listening to our customers and helping them manage their money better."

Your goal can be anything, *palanggas*—a tour of Europe, putting up your own business, getting that beautiful house on the beach, maybe even sending your kids to Harvard or perhaps retiring in your own farm.

To get a feel of how a Citipro Financial Session goes, book an appointment now in any of Citibank's branches located in prime areas in Libis, Makati, Greenhills, Binondo, Alabang and the star of the South, Cebu. Now, dahlings, with an offer like that, how can you miss?

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Not just banking
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1. CITIBANK'S hot shots. Nina Aguas, country business manager for global consumer group, and Les Matheson, Citibank Asia Pacific division executive
2. CECILLE Fonacier, Citibank's marketing director
3. AILENE Litonjua, retail banking director
4. LEAH de Guzman, Libis branch manager; Chris Ting, Binondo branch manager; and Annette Tirol, wealth management head for retail banking and Makati branch manager
5. CITIBANK'S work brigade. Nini Escuadro, treasurer; Michellina Triwardhany, cards business director; and Julie Pua, chief financial officer
6. JAQUI Wieneke, Makati core head; Nida Capistrano, business development head; Tuttie Lecaroz, Alabang branch manager

Priest opens his mind to other ideas

(Part I)

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

E-mail jlicauco@etsamail.com.ph. Visit website at www.angelfire.com/journal/licauco

Msgr. Vicente Nunag III, parish priest of San Agustin Church in Panglao, Bohol, is an unusual person. Despite the fact that he is a Catholic friar, he is open to other ideas that may, at first glance, seem heretical or contrary to orthodox Catholic teachings.

A magna cum laude graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas in Manila, Msgr. Nunag (called Boyno by close friends) was one of the priests ordained personally by Pope John Paul VI in 1970.

As a young priest, Fr. Boyno developed a close friendship with and was deeply influenced by an extraordinarily learned man, the late Congressman Luis T. Clarin, a theosophist, psychic researcher, metaphysical healer, musician and civil engineer who topped the board exams. Congressman Clarin also studied homeopathy, radionics (a method of diagnosis based on the belief that different parts of the body emit specific vibrations that help indicate illness), vegetarianism, hypnosis, and the enneagram (a system for classifying personalities using nine factors or elements). He taught Boyno the art of metaphysical or occult healing, which the latter practiced with great success.

Occult healing works

When Fr. Boyno applied the principles of occult healing to a terminally ill cancer victim, he was surprised to see the patient recover completely from that usually fatal illness. "I believe in this type of healing because it works," he confessed.

It should be explained that the word "occult" here does not refer to the black arts, or sorcery, but to the hidden laws of nature.

Because all of Congressman Clarin's children are now in the United States and have no plans of coming back, his huge library of books and the many gadgets he has bought are gathering dust in his big house in Panglao, guarded only by an aging caretaker.

I suggested to Fr. Boyno to write to the children of Mr. Clarin to donate the books to a public library or a private school, so others can benefit from his huge collection of rare and valuable sources of knowledge.

Fr. Boyno also told me he had followed my work for a long time now. I told him I seldom met a Catholic priest who could think independently and not be afraid to express his ideas, even though they might seem to be contrary to conventional ecclesiastical teachings.

Not worried

I asked Fr. Boyno if he was not afraid that his fellow priests would accuse him of communing with the devil because of his interest in esoteric or occult matters. He replied that they could think what they wanted. "The devil has become a favorite whipping boy."

I could not agree with him more. I said I really pitied the devil because, in this country, he was blamed for things he had not done and credited for things he did not do. Anything that religious people do not like or do not understand is blamed on the poor devil..

Fr. Boyno said, "Okay *lang* if I'm misunderstood as long as I understand my God."

It was his cousin, Maria Luisa Lamoste, an actuary by profession and a part-time astrologer, who introduced me to Fr. Boyno. She said he was a great admirer of my work and had spent hours discussing it and my ideas with her.

So I gave him a copy of my latest book, "On Christianity, New Age and Reincarnation." Before I left Bohol, he handed me a note that said in part, "Thanks so much for that book. The real Jesus must be amused with scholars who dare to delve into stark truth, whether comfortable, uncomfortable, or perplexing. I thank the Lord for disciples like you.

"I look forward to learning more from you. Malou is more than right in all the things she said about you as a model transcendental Christian.

"Hoping that you come to Bohol more often in the future, I remain, sincerely in the real Jesus, Msgr. Boyno."

(*Next week:* The Miraculous Sto. Niño of Panglao)

New technology lessens risk of spinal injury

PEOPLE need not suffer anymore from the physical discomforts and psychological problems caused by scoliosis.

Help is now available in the form of the Image Guided Surgery (IGS) system at St. Luke's Medical Center's Institute of Orthopedics and Sports Medicine. IGS is a combination of a high-speed computer system and specialized software with tracking technology.

Scoliosis is a bone disorder where there is an abnormal curvature of the spine. Prevalent among women and affecting both young and old, it may result from a birth defect or may develop during the teen years, at times with no apparent cause.

An indication of scoliosis is when one shoulder or hip is higher than the other. The condition can range from mild to severe and can cause permanent deformities, chronic pain and damage to internal organs.

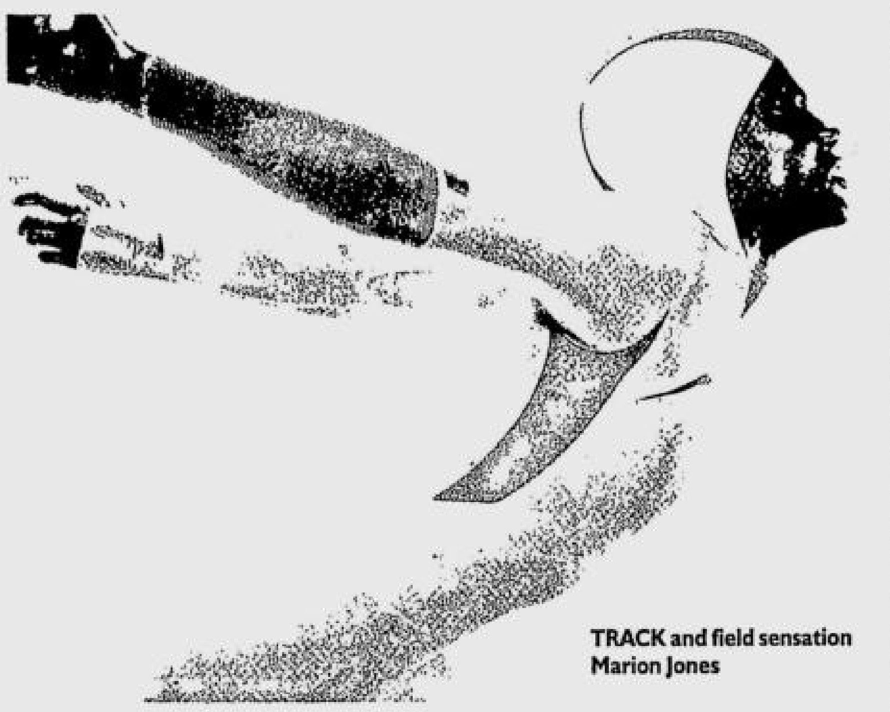
Dr. Mario Ver, institute director, said with IGS, putting instrumentation (screws to stabilize the spine) became easier and almost risk-free. The new system has a high degree of precision and success rate. Instead of hours, the procedure is shortened to a few minutes.

With IGS, the actual movement of surgical instruments is displayed on the system's monitor. The IGS provides a three-dimensional visualization and guides surgical instruments for greater accuracy.

Ver said IGS was also totally safe.

The Philippines is the only Southeast Asian country and second only to South Korea in the whole of Asia in the use of this latest medical technology in spine navigation.

Ver is an international member of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons with several fellowships from medical institutions in Asia and the United States.



TRACK and field sensation Marion Jones

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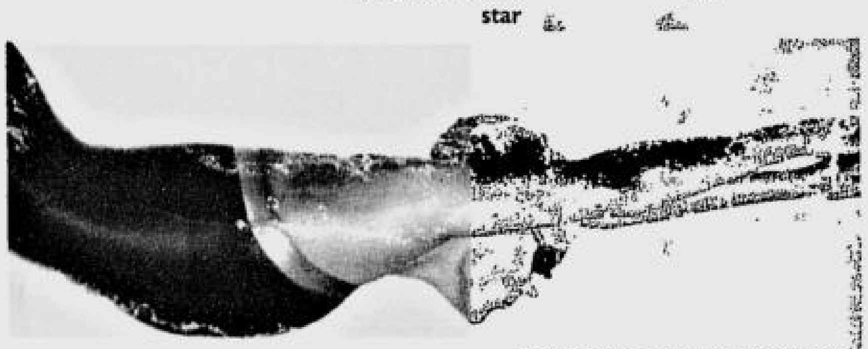
Speed has become a part of Nike DNA because all athletes are obsessed with it.

Visit a Nike store now to check out the newest line of products, so that you will also believe you are faster than you think.

ANTONIS Fotsis, a member of the Greek basketball team

SERENA Williams, American tennis star



AMERICAN swimmer Haley Cope

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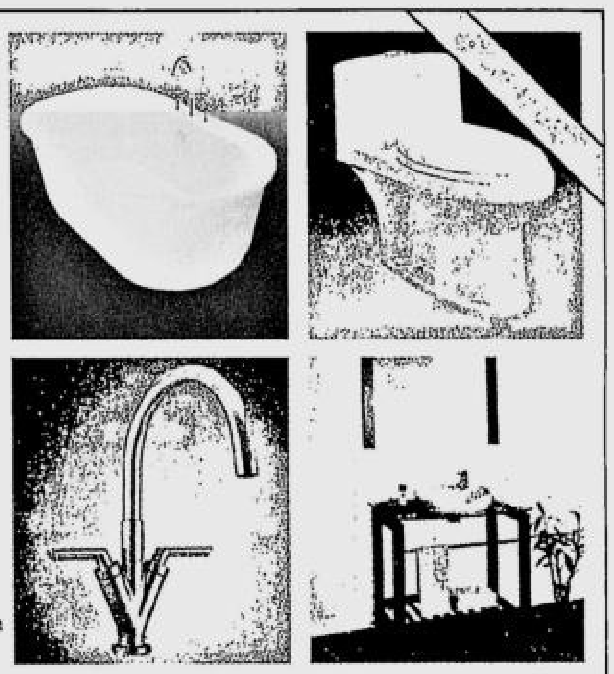

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Take Charge Doc!

Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

What methods of treatment are usually employed for lung cancer?

The treatment method for lung cancer has evolved from a single modality approach--surgery, to multi-modality treatment programs like chemotherapy and radiotherapy that call upon the skills of various doctors from different specialties. Radiation or radiotherapy uses high-energy rays to kill lung cancer cells, shrink tumors, and prevent cancer cells from dividing and spreading. Radiation is directed to the area where the tumor is located and injures or destroys the cells by damaging the cells' genetic material making it impossible for them to grow. Chemotherapy is administered by the use of powerful drugs to attack cancer cells. The drugs circulate throughout the body in the bloodstream and may kill any rapidly growing cells, including cancer cells and some healthy cells. The therapeutic programs may be based on the guidelines designed for the management of lung cancer taking into consideration the type and stage of the illness.

Dr. Gabriel E. De Leon provides us with this week's answer to our question on lung cancer treatment. Doc Gabby graduated from Medicine at UERM-MMC. He finished his specialization training for Internal Medicine at Capitol Medical Center and in 1994, took residency training for a subspecialty in Pulmonology. MEDICard members may visit his clinic at Dr. Jesus C. Delgado Memorial Hospital located at Kamuning Road in Quezon City for their consultation needs, Room B11 from Mondays to Fridays, 4 to 7 PM.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA (c/o *TAKE CHARGE DOC!*) or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for inquiries on health matters.

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC.: 9/F Sagittarius Bldg., H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227 TRUNKLINE: 867-2020 FAX NO.: 894-5720; 810-3858 TEXT: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe and Touch Mobile) or to 4627 (Smart and Talk N' Text). INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY SALES: 818-2161 CORPORATE SALES: 846-8462, 846-6450, 846-6461 E-MAIL: inquiry@medicardphils.com; feedback@medicardphils.com WEBSITE: www.medicardphils.com

Toyota Motor Renews MEDICard HMO Plan

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES CORP. (TMP), the market leader in the Philippine automotive manufacturing industry, signed recently the renewal of its corporate healthcare agreement with MEDICard. Present during the contract signing were (seated L-R) Toyota's Jose Maria Aligada (1st VP, Gen. Admin. Div.) and Dr. David Go (EVP) with MEDICard's Dr. Nicanor Montoya (Pres.) and Luis Montoya (EVP & GM). Standing (L-R) are Rona Dugang (Toyota Group Head Com. & Ben.), Cristina Arevalo (Toyota VP-HR), Miriam Villafuerte (MEDICard Mktg. Srvcs. Mngr.) and Coco Cervantes (MEDICard Mktg. Srvcs. Asst. Sup.). TMP has been a valued MEDICard client since 1991

ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

What's new—and old—in wellness

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

THE WELLNESS landscape is ever changing. And what is more exciting than the changes is the anticipation. In some cases though, the old becomes new. Ancient practices are seen in a new and welcome light.

Here are some old and new finds designed to help us live a little longer, a little better.

Fake fats

New fats or faux fats were made to reduce people's fat consumption.

- Olestra (or Olean) is made of sucrose and fatty acids designed not to be absorbed by the body.

Used in the United States in snack foods such as potato chips, it does reduce the total grams of fat consumed. However, it has been found to reduce a person's beta carotene level by 50 percent. A side effect is loose stools. The product has since been fortified with vitamins.

- Z-Trim, one of the newest fake fats in the market, was designed by the US Department of Agriculture. Made from oat hulls, it provides fiber and cuts down on calories. No known side effects.
- Simpless, a milk-and-egg white fat substitute, is used in low-calorie frozen desserts. It was found to be unstable in heat and cannot be used in cooked products.

Advisory: While fake fats can clearly cut down fat consumption, they do not promote a healthier lifestyle that requires not eating fatty products in the first place.

(From "Vitamin Bible for the 21st Century", by Earl Mindell)

Activated charcoal

Used by the Egyptians for thousands of years as a detoxifier, charcoal's health benefits have withstood the test of time. Available in loose, powder form or in tablets, the efficacy of activated charcoal is instantly felt. Made from coconut shells in a special process called calcinations, it is used externally and internally. Among others, it is used as a poultice for the treatment of dog and snake bites, sores, wounds, thyroid problems, respiratory problems, breast and other forms of cancer, kidney/liver diseases.

Usage: One tablespoon in a half glass of water one hour before meals as an astringent/detoxifier of the gastrointestinal tract (for diarrhea, gas pains, indigestion)—International Pharmaceuticals (032) 2312685; Dr. Alicia Delfin, 0918-3262639.

Latest dieting tips

Remember to consult a physician before starting any diet. Your family doctor will know your particular diet requirements especially if you have a health condition.

- If you are a wine lover, remember that a glass of wine stimulates gastric juices if taken before a meal. Note that white wine has fewer calories than red. However, red wine is high in antioxidants. For a wide selection of good vintages, try Bacchus at the Shangri-La Hotel Makati, tel. 8135022, 8671011.
- Are you a popcorn fanatic? Even if it is considered a low-calorie snack, be aware that movie-theater popcorn contains nearly twice the calories of the "light" microwave- or kettle-cooked. For fresh kettle-popped corn, try Holy Kettle Corn at Alabang Town Center, tel. 8074868; Derek Chiongbian
- Be aware of these diet fallacies:
  gelatin is not fattening
  grapefruit contributes to weight loss
  there are no calories in fruits
  steak is not as fattening as potatoes
  toast has less calories than bread

Holistic massage

This is a combination of two massage therapies designed to balance the energies of your body while undergoing touch treatment. It is a fusion of Obi and Destress body massages where the *kyo* (under energy) and *jitsu* (over energy) restore equilibrium by releasing blocked energy. The use of invigorating kneading, friction and firm stroking make for a relaxing and energizing experience. At Total Skinn, tel. 894-5877, 8/L, Pearlbank Centre Bldg., Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City.

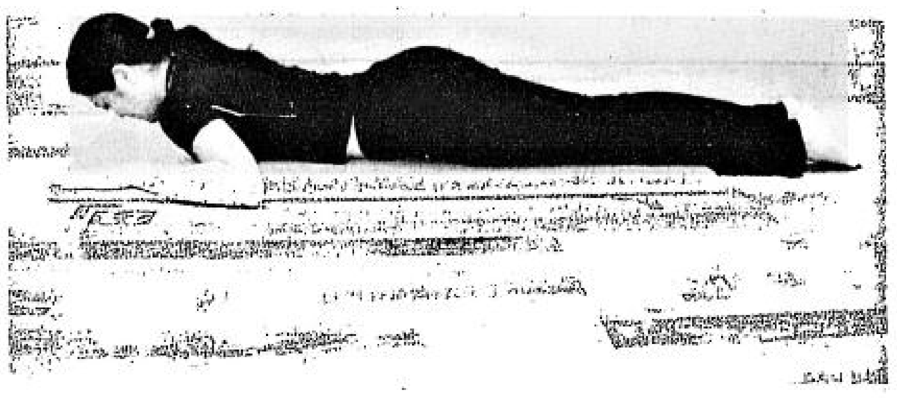
Home spa

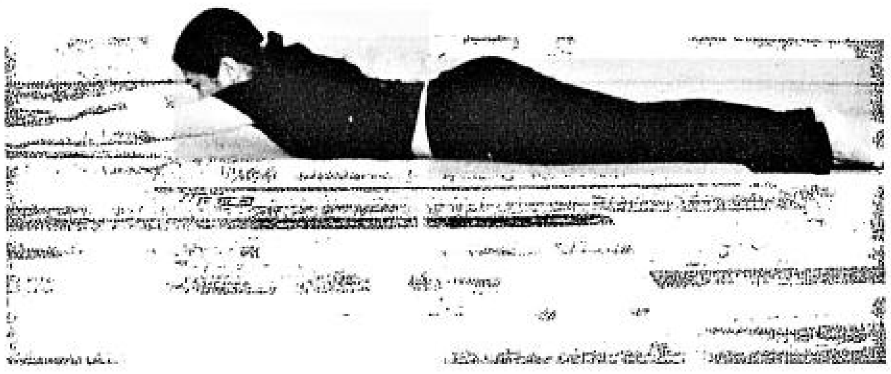
A spa goes on house calls and you get all the elements of a regular setup. Aromatherapy, candle light, meditation, music and masseurs are delivered to your very doorstep. For this rejuvenating spa-at-home service at a reasonable price, call 6712366 or text 0917-7951998.

Love and light!

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Breaststroke





THIS Pilates-inspired exercise strengthens the upper and lower back muscles.

Equipment:

Exercise mat.

Exercise technique:

1. Lie face down with your legs together, arms bent with hands beside your face, elbows facing backwards.
2. Bring your arms forward.
3. Circle your arms backward to your hips (not shown), then lift the upper back and hold for one second.
4. Return to starting position and repeat the movement for the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Maintain good neck alignment by lengthening your neck and looking down at the mat when you bring your arms forward. As your arms circle backward, lift with your upper back and your neck should automatically follow. Do not start the lift by throwing your neck backward.
2. Exhale as you bring the arms forward; inhale as you circle the arms backward.
3. Visualize doing the breaststroke in water.
4. Concentrate on lengthening and elongating your body.
5. If you have lower back problems, please consult your doctor first.

Repetitions:

Five to 10 repetitions.

IF SOMEONE YOU ARE CARING FOR HAS SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS, BUILD THEIR STRENGTH WITH **NUTREN**.

When you're looking after a loved one's particular needs, you become aware of how things can suddenly change.

Now, their current medical condition prevents them from being as active as they once were.

Bring back the spark and energy into their lives with a better way of caring. One that can make them feel stronger everyday.

Nutren is a delicious meal replacement product and supplement in powder form – a breakthrough from the Nestlé Research Center in Switzerland. Known and prescribed by doctors, Nutren provides support for medical conditions where the role of nutrition is vital. In itself, Nutren is more than a complete meal since it contains whey plus all of the essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals in **every** glass.

In fact, Nutren contains at least 3 times more whey protein than any other commercially-prepared food product or homemade alternative. Whey protein has been clinically proven to:

- help maintain muscle mass throughout aging and repair body tissues[1]
- help boost the immune system by raising levels of glutathione (an **antioxidant**), thereby helping reduce the risk of infection[2]

	WHEY
Nutren Meal Replacement	HIGH
Milk suppements	LOW
Table food	NONE

With Nutren, you can give the best and complete care possible, making everyday a special one to look forward to.

FEEL STRONGER EVERYDAY

Available at all leading drugstores nationwide.

Nestlé Nutrition
Nutren Solutions
SPECIALIZED NUTRITION

[1] [illegible] [2] [illegible]

ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT NUTREN. If you also want to know more about other Nestlé products, you can call us at 898-0061 and we'll be happy to answer your concerns.